

**Native and Non-Native Matters:  
Focus on Finnish Upper Secondary School Students' Perceptions of  
Native and Non-Native Teachers of English**

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Tutkimus tarkastelee suomalaisten oppilaiden näkemyksiä englannin kielestä, sen opetuksesta ja erityisesti englannin kielen opettajista. Tutkimuksen keskiössä ovat syntyperäiset, englantia äidinkielenään puhuvat *natiiviopettajat* sekä ei-syntyperäiset, äidinkielenään jotakin toista kieltä kuin englantia puhuvat *ei-natiiviopettajat*. Tutkimus toteutettiin kyselytutkimuksena ja siinä käytettyyn sähköiseen kyselyyn vastasi yhteensä 183 viimeisen vuosikurssin opiskelijaa viidestä tamperelaisesta lukiosta. Kyselyn keskeisenä tarkoituksena oli selvittää, minkälaiset ovat oppilaiden näkemykset natiivi- ja ei-natiiviopettajista ja pitävätkö oppilaat toista opettajaryhmää parempana kuin toista. Lisäksi kyselyn avulla voitiin tarkastella oppilaiden käsityksiä englannin globaalista asemasta sekä siihen liittyvistä muista aiheista, kuten kielenopetuksen tavoitteista ja erilaisista englannin kielen varieteeteista. Kyselyllä pyrittiin myös selvittämään, onko oppilaiden mieltymyksillä yhteyttä eräisiin taustatekijöihin, kuten oppilaiden kielitaitoon, heidän aiempiin opettajakokemuksiinsa tai heidän näkemyksiinsä kielenopetuksen oppimistavoitteista. Tutkimus siis käsittelee yleisesti oppilaiden suhtautumista englannin kielen asemaan ja sen tuomiin muutoksiin, mutta kuitenkin keskittyy ensisijaisesti oppilaiden opettajamieltymyksiin ja niiden syihin.

Tutkimusaiheeseen liittyvät viime vuosikymmeninä tapahtuneet muutokset englannin kielen ja sen puhujien asemassa. Englannin kielestä on kehittynyt globaali kansainvälinen kieli ja samaan aikaan sen puhujien määrä on kasvanut huomattavaa vauhtia. Suurin osa näistä uusista puhujista ei kuitenkaan puhu englantia äidinkielenään, vaan he ovat niin sanottuja ei-natiivipuhujia, jotka ovat hiljalleen alkaneet muokata kieltä omien tarpeidensa ja taipumuksiensa mukaan. Vaikka ei-natiivipuhujien määrä onkin maailmalla kasvanut ja samalla esiin on noussut erilaisia englannin kielen varieteetteja, vieraan kielen opetuksessa kuitenkin natiivipuhujilla ja heidän varieteeteillaan on yhä merkittävä rooli. Perinteisesti onkin ajateltu, että natiivipuhuja osaa parhaiten englantia, joten hänen täytyy myös olla paras vaihtoehto opettamaan sitä. Englannin kielen ja sen puhujien nykyinen asema on kuitenkin kyseenalaistanut tämän oletuksen, ja siksi onkin keskeistä kysyä, onko paras mahdollinen englannin opettaja siis natiivi- vai ei-natiivipuhuja. Tässä keskustelussa oppilailla on ensiarvoinen rooli, sillä oppilaiden omat näkemykset vaikuttavat eniten heidän asenteisiinsa ja sitä kautta oppimiseen.

Tutkimuksessa ilmeni, että oppilaat ovat tietoisia englannin kielen globaalista asemasta ja sen tuomista muutoksista heidän omaan kielitarpeeseensa ja kielenkäyttöönsä. Vaikka oppilaat tiedostavatkin puhujien muuttuneen aseman ja ovat ainakin osittain valmiita hylkäämään opetustavoitteet, jotka pyrkivät natiivitasoiseen kielikompetenssiin, heidän on silti vaikea luopua

natiivipuhujaan pohjautuvasta ideaalista englannin osaajasta. Tämä ilmenee muun muassa oppilaiden haluna kuulostaa natiivipuhujilta ja ihailuna sellaisia suomalaisia kohtaan, jotka pystyvät puhumaan englantia yhtä sujuvasti kuin natiivit. Tutkimuksen tulokset kuitenkin osoittivat, etteivät oppilaat arvostaneet natiiviopettajia ei-natiiviopettajia enemmän. Itse asiassa oppilaat valitsisivat mieluiten molemmat opettajat, eikä natiivi- ja ei-natiiviopettajien kannatuksessa ilmennyt suuria eroja. Osa oppilaista ei edes ilmaissut mieltymystään kumpaakaan opettajaryhmää kohtaan vaan totesi, ettei opettajan syntyperällä ole merkitystä. Lisäksi oppilaat ilmaisivat, että tärkeimmät englannin kielen opettajan ominaisuudet voivat löytyä molemmista opettajaryhmistä, ja oppilaat pystyvät oppimaan yhtä hyvin oli opettaja sitten natiivi tai ei.

Oppilaiden mieltymyksiin vaikuttivat eniten heidän aiempien natiiviopettajakokemuksiensa luonne sekä heidän näkemyksensä kielenopetuksen tavoitteista. Tutkimuksessa ilmeni, että näiden lisäksi kielitaito ja aikaisempien natiiviopettajakokemusten olemassaolo olivat yhteydessä oppilaiden mieltymyksiin koskien natiivi- ja ei-natiiviopettajia. Tutkimuksen perusteella voidaan siis sanoa, että vaikka suurin osa oppilaista ei osoita mieltymystä kumpaakaan opettajaryhmää kohtaan, osalle opettajan syntyperällä on merkitys. Siihen, kumman opettajan oppilaat valitsevat, vaikuttavat oppilaiden kielitaiton, heidän näkemyksensä kielenopetuksen oppimistavoitteista ja aiemmat kokemuksensa natiiviopettajien kanssa.

Tutkimustulokset voimaannuttavat sekä natiivi- että ei-natiiviopettajia. Oppilaiden mielestä kumpikaan ryhmä ei ole parempi kuin toinen vaan molemmilla on hyvät puolensa. Lisäksi opettajien ei tarvitse mukautua ennalta määrättyjen odotusten mukaisesti, vaan molemmat opettajaryhmät voivat kouluttautumalla saavuttaa samoja vahvuuksia. Tutkimustulokset kuitenkin korostavat, että opettajien täytyy myös huomioida oppilaidensa tarpeet ja antaa erilaista tukea eritasoisille oppilaille. Tulevaisuuden kielenopetuksessa voitaisiin hyödyntää molempia opettajaryhmiä ja kehittää opetusmetodeja, joissa molemmat opettajat toimisivat yhdessä oppilaiden kanssa luoden oppilaille autenttisen pohjan kielitaidollensa. Samalla voitaisiin kannustaa oppilaita tarkastelemaan kriittisesti englannin kielen asemaa maailmalla ja täten auttaa oppilaita saavuttamaan realistisempi kuva heidän kielitaitotarpeistaan.

Avainsanat: englannin kieli, natiivi- ja ei-natiivipuhuja, englannin kielen opetus ja opettajat.

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## 1 Introduction

Once only used by a handful of speakers living in the British Isles, the English language has today spread around the world and evolved into a global language. David Crystal (2008, 3-5) estimates that the number of English speakers has increased from a modest five to seven million in the 16<sup>th</sup> century to an immensely more substantial two billion speakers in the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century – this means that a third of the world’s population can be considered English-speaking. What is more, the majority of these new speakers are *non-native speakers of English*, meaning that they have acquired English as a second or additional language (Crystal 2003, 69). Indeed, Crystal (2003, 69) recognizes that the focal point of English has moved away from the native speaker and toward the non-native speaker. English is thus no longer considered only the native speaker’s property; instead, it has become an international commodity “up for grabs”.

The important international role of English is also recognized in Finland, and English has a central role in the Finnish educational system: English was the most popular foreign language to be studied by Finnish upper secondary school senior-students in 2013 (Official Statistics of Finland 2013). The challenge the new role of English thus poses on education is one of language choice, or better yet, choice of variety. As English is increasingly being used by non-native speakers, they themselves also influence the language and give rise to new non-native varieties (Crystal 2008, 6). Does the non-native speaker then, in an international context, have the right to provide the norms, or should the native speaker, in all circumstances, retain ownership of the language? And consequently, should the norms being taught in schools be those of the native speaker or those of the non-native speaker? The implications these questions have on language learning are quite concrete. They raise the question of textbook models, test standards, and eventually the teachers. Is the best English teacher a native or a non-native teacher?

Suresh Canagarajah (1999, 91) estimates that 80% of the English teachers worldwide are in fact non-native speakers of English. Nonetheless, there is a long held view in the educational world,

referred to by Robert Phillipson (1992, 193) as the *native speaker fallacy*, which promotes the assumption that native speakers make ideal English teachers. According to Canagarajah (1999, 80), this assumption is based on the native speakers' superior language skills and their ability to serve as models of proper language use. However, a native command of the language does not automatically convert into good teaching skills: "[l]anguage teaching is an art, a science, and a skill that requires complex pedagogical preparation and practice" (Canagarajah 1999, 80). Setting aside the question of superiority for a while, it is worth to note that beneath this discussion lays the assumption that these two groups of teachers, the native English speakers and the non-native English speakers, actually differ from each other so significantly that it is worthwhile to argue about superiority in the first place. But is this truly the case?

Péter Medgyes was one of the first scholars to actually study the native and non-native English-speaking teachers, referred to as *NESTs* and *non-NESTs*. His work has been centered on four hypotheses (Reves and Medgyes, 1994; Árvai and Medgyes, 2000):

1. NESTs and non-NESTs differ in their teaching behavior.
2. These differences are due to divergent levels of language proficiency.
3. The awareness of the differences in proficiency influence the non-NESTs' self-perception and teaching attitudes.
4. They can be equally good teachers in their own terms.

In their international survey of English teachers' self-perceptions, Reves and Medgyes (1994) argue that the differences in linguistic skills between native and non-native teachers account for the different teaching styles, and furthermore, the realization of their linguistic limitations may cause the non-native teachers to create poorer self-images. Árvai and Medgyes (2000) confirmed the existence of these differences by examining class room recordings, although there were some aspects of stated behavior that did not come across in the recordings. Medgyes's main tenet regarding native and non-native teachers could be summarized by this quote from him: "they will never become indistinguishable. Nor would it be desirable, either!" (Medgyes 2009, 76).

English teachers themselves seem to recognize the differences between native and non-native teachers, and although they are the only ones who can comment on their own self-image and self-esteem, another perspective is needed to examine the true effects of the teachers' nativeness on language learning, namely the perspective of the students. The number of studies focusing on students' perceptions of native and non-native English teachers has been steadily increasing during the past decade, but thus far, the studies have been able to cover only a fraction of the countries where English is used and focused mostly on the views of university students. Nevertheless, Lasagabaster and Sierra (2005, 235) state that all of these studies help teachers to realize their strengths and weaknesses. Moreover, these studies provide information for schools and educational bodies on how to improve their foreign language education in the future. This is especially topical in Finland since the reformation of the core curricula for both basic and upper secondary education is currently under work (Tähkä 2013, 4).

This study continues the research tradition on students' perceptions of native and non-native teachers by adding Finland to the list of countries examined. After all, the situation differs from one country to another: the linguistic situation, the role English plays in the society, and the educational system, teacher training, as well as teachers and students themselves are different. However, the question of teachers cannot be isolated from other issues related to native and non-native speakers of English. Hence, this study attempts to discover what the language learners think about native and non-native matters in foreign language education with special focus on native and non-native teachers of English. This study is centered on four research questions:

1. How do Finnish upper secondary school students perceive the learning targets of EFL, the current role of English in the world, and the different varieties of English?
2. How do Finnish upper secondary school students perceive the native and non-native teachers of English? What are their strengths and weaknesses?
3. Do Finnish upper secondary school students show a preference towards native or non-native teachers of English? Why? Why not?
4. Are some background factors related to the Finnish upper secondary school students' choice of preference (i.e. students' linguistic skills, their views on learning targets, or the students' experiences with the teachers)?



On a general level, my research questions are thus focused on the students' perceptions of issues related to the global status of English, such as learning targets, different varieties, as well as native and non-native teachers of English. On a more specific level, the study aims to answer whether the students prefer a native or non-native teacher, what reasons the students give for their choice, and whether some background factors relate to their choice of preference. The specific background factors examined in this study were chosen because they have either been studied before or previous research has suggested that they might have an effect on the students' teacher preference (see Lasagabaster and Sierra 2002, 2005; He and Miller 2011; Watson Todd and Pojanapunya 2009; Margić and Širola 2010; Jin 2005). In order to investigate these questions, an online survey was conducted in five Finnish general upper secondary schools with 183 senior-year students taking part in it. This empirical study serves as the basis for the current research.

Before going into the details of the study itself, I will provide some background information on the issues at hand. In Chapter 2, I shall examine the role of English in the world, its spread and its functions, with special attention given to the situation in Finland in Section 2.3. In Chapter 3, I will look at the implications of global English for foreign language education focusing, in Section 3.1, on the learning targets and teaching models and in Sections 3.2 and 3.3, on the speakers and teachers of English. After presenting this theoretical background to the study, I will turn the attention to the study itself: the data and methodology are presented in Chapter 4 and the results in Chapter 5. Finally, I will discuss the major findings of the study and answer the research questions in Chapter 6 and give a brief conclusion in Chapter 7.

## 2 English in the world

The main focus of the present study is on the native and non-native teachers of English; however, the issues at hand are to a large extent intertwined with other complex issues related to the current role of English in the world. Therefore, it is necessary to begin the discussion from the broader perspective of global English. According to Crystal (2003, 3), *a global language* is one that has acquired a special role that is recognized in every country. English has accomplished this by spreading across the world and becoming an official language, or an important foreign language, in many countries, where it is used for functions within the country or between other countries (Crystal 2003, 4-5). In order to then understand how the emergence of a global language may affect foreign language education, one must first be familiar with the historical and socio-cultural context of the language. This chapter shall therefore focus on these issues: in Section 2.1, I will present a brief overview of the development of global English, and in Sections 2.2 and 2.3, I will describe the current roles and functions of English worldwide and in Finland.

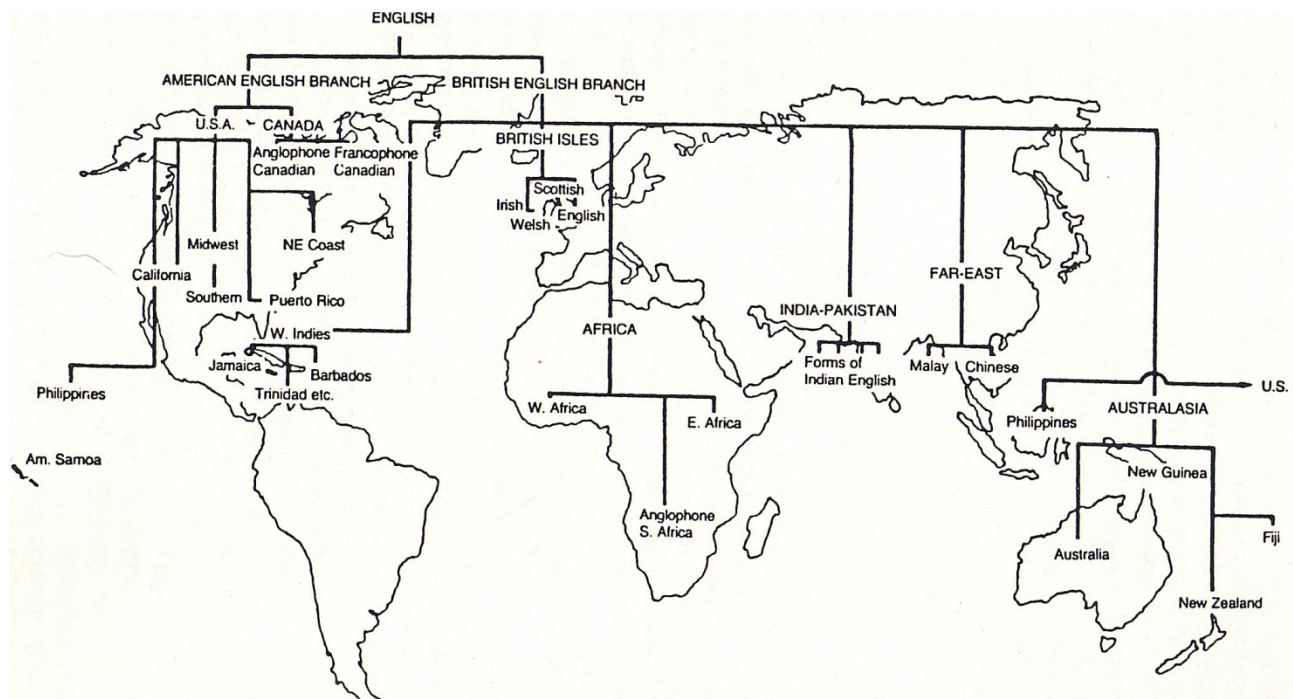
### 2.1 The development of English into a global language

By examining the history of the English language from the perspective of language spread and contact, one can identify a number of different phases during which the English language has been transported around the world. However, the exact number of phases differs depending on the time period under investigation. If the focus is on the entire history of English from its origins to the present day, altogether five different phases of language spread can be discovered.

According to Mesthrie and Bhatt (2008, 12), the first phase marks the origins of English: in AD 450, the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes crossed the North Sea into Britain and brought with them their Germanic dialect, from which the English language evolved. For a long period of time, the English language was mostly confined to the southeast corner of the British Isles, and it was not until after a thousand years or so that the second phase of language spread was complete and the language had spread (through conquest and internal colonization) into Wales, Scotland, and Ireland

(Mesthrie and Bhatt 2008, 14-15). According to Mesthrie and Bhatt (2008, 16), the spread of English from the British Isles to other parts of the globe began during the colonial period. Jenkins (2009, 5-9) identifies two distinct phases (or “diasporas”) of language spread during this period. The first one transported the language to the colonies in North America and Oceania, where the English language evolved into varieties of their own, which became to be used as the dominant languages of the areas (Jenkins 2009, 5). The second of the colonial diasporas introduced English to the colonies in Africa and Asia, where although the language evolved into new varieties, it was only used as an additional language alongside the local languages (*ibid.*, pp. 7-9). The map of English by Stevens (1992, 33), as shown in Figure 1, illustrates the territories to which English spread during the four phases discussed above and indicates whether the varieties that developed were based on British or American English.

**Figure 1.** Stevens’s map of English (Stevens 1992, 33).



In the four earliest phases, the agents spreading the language had been the speakers of English; as English-speaking settlers arrived to an area, they transported their language with them. However, according to Mesthrie and Bhatt (2008, 17), the fifth and final phase differs from the previous ones since it has now been the language which spreads, not its speakers, and moreover, the

spread has occurred in countries with no historical connection to Britain or other traditionally English-speaking countries. Crystal (2008, 5) estimates that currently, up to a third of the world's population can be considered as English speakers.

There have been two major historical reasons for the current status of English: the imperial power of the British during the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the political and economic power of the United States in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Both were needed in the development of a global language since, as Crystal (2003, 10) notes, “[i]t may take a militarily powerful nation to establish a language, but it takes an economically powerful one to maintain and expand it”. Thus, it can be argued that the historical foundation of global English lies with the imperial aspirations of the British, and it was colonialism that transported the language to many places around the world. However, the rise of the United States into a leading economic and political power aided in maintaining the English language in former colonies after independence and in expanding it to many European countries and to countries such as China or Brazil (Crystal 2003, 59). At present, this spread is being forwarded by economic and cultural globalization: English is the language of international commerce, science, media, popular culture, as well as social media and the Internet (Leppänen and Nikula 2008, 13).

Whatever the historical reasons for the spread of English, no global language would have developed unless there had been a need for one. Crystal (2003, 11) sees that this need derives from a human desire to communicate with other people even though they speak different languages; in other words, a reason for adopting a global language has been the need for a shared language, a *lingua franca*, both within countries (*intranationally*) and between countries (*internationally*). English serves as an intranational *lingua franca* in many former British colonies in Africa and Asia, where many countries are multilingual, meaning there are several languages within one society, and for them, English has become a neutral *lingua franca* (Crystal 2003, 11). As for an international *lingua franca*, the need is especially true now that technological advances in both telecommunication and air travel have made communicating with people from around the world easier than ever (*ibid.*, p. 13).

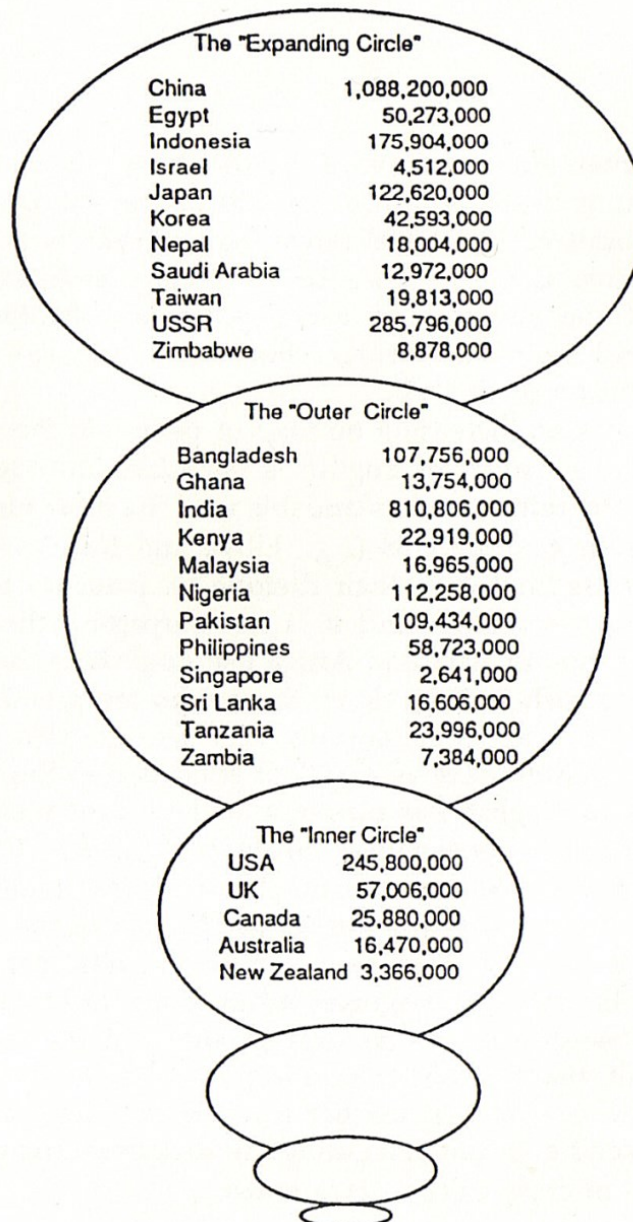
All in all, the English language has happened to be “at the right place at the right time” (Crystal 2003, 78): as the language of British colonialism but also as the language of modernization and globalization. In many countries, especially in the former colonies, this dual identity of the language has posed serious problems as, on the one hand, the former colonies have wanted to escape the colonial oppression and legacy attached to English but, on the other hand, they have realized the potential prospects related to maintaining English (Kirkpatrick 2007, 180). However, this issue is currently becoming irrelevant since “English has today surpassed the charmed circle of Anglo-American econo-political control, and is being fostered both by its opponents and by ‘third parties’” (Fishman 1992, 20). In other words, English is no longer considered a national language; instead, it is being used according to the interests of the non-native speakers. This new status of English and the ever growing number of non-native speakers raise questions when considering the norms of the language both for the speakers who use it in their daily lives and for the foreign language learners, as shall be seen in the following sections.

## **2.2 Current linguistic situation**

The spread of the English language around the world has resulted in the emergence of a global language, but in addition to this, within many countries the spread has led to the development of new linguistic varieties (Leith 2007, 122). In order to construct a framework within which one can describe the current role of English in the world and categorize the different varieties of English, their functions, and speakers, certain models may be employed. One model has already been presented, Stevens’s map of English (see Figure 1, page 6), which is a type of a tree diagram superimposed on a map of the world. Though Strevens’s model (1992) illustrates the geographical spread of English in the first four phases of language spread, it fails to provide sufficient information about the different varieties, and it does not take into account the final phase of language spread at all.

The most influential model of different varieties of English has been Braj Kachru's model (1992a) of three concentric circles of English (see Figure 2). According to Kachru (1992a, 356), these circles "represent the types of spread, the patterns of acquisition, and the functional allocation of English in diverse cultural contexts". This model thus attempts to describe all varieties of English, not on the basis of geography alone, but according to how English spread to the area, how the speakers acquire it, and what its functions are in the society. The classification of the varieties is represented by the three different circles: the *Inner Circle*, the *Outer Circle*, and the *Expanding Circle*.

**Figure 2.** Kachru's model of World Englishes (Kachru 1992a, 356).



### 2.2.1 *The Inner, the Outer, and the Expanding Circles*

The first circle in Kachru's model (1992a) is the *Inner Circle*, which refers to the traditionally English-speaking countries: the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, where English is used as a native language. The speakers in these countries acquire English as a *first language (L1)*, referring to the language which is acquired as a child at home (Melchers and Shaw 2003, 39). These countries represent colonies where the precolonial population was displaced by a substantial number of English-speaking settlers thus becoming predominantly English-speaking with local languages having little influence on the varieties of English (Leith 2007, 122). At present, English is not necessarily the official national language in these countries, but it is the native language of the majority of the population, who uses it in all domains of life both public and private (Melchers and Shaw 2003, 36, 80)

Kachru's (1992a) second circle is the *Outer Circle*, which contains many former British colonies in Africa and Asia, such as India, Kenya, Nigeria, and Malaysia, where English is used as a second language. A *second language (L2)* refers to an additional language learned after the first language (*OED Online s.v. second language n.*). The difference between a second language and a foreign language has to do with the position of English within the society: a second language has an institutionalized function in the society (i.e. used in administration, education, or social situations); whereas a foreign language serves no special function within the country (Strevens 1992, 36).

The Outer Circle countries exemplify a form of colonization where a small number of English-speaking settlers "maintained the precolonial population in subjection" (Leith 2007, 120). According to Leith (2007, 124), in these situations, there was extensive language contact between English and local languages, and as a result, many new varieties of English with distinctive local linguistic features emerged. These varieties represent what Kachru (1992a, 356) calls the *institutionalized non-native varieties*. They have important functions in the society (e.g. in administrative, educational, and social contexts), they exhibit a range of styles and registers, and the speakers have emotional ties to the varieties (Kachru 1992b, 54). According to Kachru (1992a,

359), these local varieties of English are in fact being accepted as varieties of their own, with their own histories, traditions, and norms.

The third circle in Kachru's model (1992a) is the *Expanding Circle*. It encompasses the countries where English is used and learned as a foreign language; for example, China, Japan, Saudi Arabia, and Finland. A *foreign language* is an additional language which serves no special function within the society (Strevens 1992, 36). These countries, where English is a foreign language, have not been under the control of the United Kingdom or the United States, but nevertheless, they have noticed the important international role of English and decided that it would be in their best interest that the people learn English (Melcher and Shaw 2003, 178-180). The Expanding Circle varieties are, according to Kachru (1992a, 357), *performance varieties*. These varieties are thus mostly used in foreign language context, meaning that they have a limited functional range and that they have no special status in the societies (Kachru 1992b, 55). Furthermore, these varieties are exonormative, in other words, dependable of the norms provided by the Inner circle varieties (Kachru 1985, 17).

### ***2.2.2 Critique of Kachru's model***

Though Kachru's model (1992a) has proven to be useful and the terminology of the model has become standard in applied linguistics, certain considerations should be made when using the model. The model is to a large extent based on a three-way distinction that divides the English-speaking territories into those where English is used either as a native language (ENL), a second language (ESL), or a foreign language (EFL), and according to Schneider (2012, 32), this division provides a rather simplified view of reality. For example, there are large populations of ESL and EFL speakers in ENL territories and vice versa (Schneider 2012, 32-33). In addition, McArthur (1998, 43,45) notes that the number of different accents of English and the amount of code-mixing and code-switching between English and other languages is not conveyed by the model. Even more pressingly, there are territories (such as Jamaica) which do not seem to fit any of the three categories. Kachru (1985, 14; 1992a, 362) himself has noted that territories like Jamaica are difficult to place in the model for their complex situations. In many of these countries, the pre-



colonial population was replaced: for example in the case of the Caribbean Islands, the pre-colonial population had to make room for slave-laborers brought mostly from West Africa to work on the plantations (Leith 2007, 120). According to Leith (2007, 147), in these situations, the non-existence of a common language resulted in the development of English-based pidgins and creoles, which in turn are difficult to categorize as either ENL, ESL, or EFL. Finally, McArthur (1998, 45) points out that the three-way model may “obscure – and divert attention from– the more basic, longstanding binary division in most people’s minds between ‘native speakers’ and ‘foreign learners’”, where the former are considered prior and superior due to birthright. The issue of native and non-native speakers is a pressing one, and it shall be more thoroughly discussed in Section 3.2.

Jenkins (2009, 20-21) argues that Kachru’s model (1992a) does not necessarily depict the way people speak or use the language anymore and thus, the boundaries between different circles are becoming increasingly fuzzy. More precisely, in some Outer Circle countries English is being more and more learnt and used as a first language; likewise, in many Expanding Circle countries the uses of English are beginning to represent ESL functions (Jenkins 2009, 16). In addition, the model does not take into consideration the increasing amount of bilingualism, or multilingualism, exhibited by the speakers (Mesthrie and Shaw 2003, 37). Leppänen and Nikula (2008, 15) thus propose that a new model is needed. Instead of being based on nation states and examining the language from the perspective of a single language system, the new model should allow the language to be examined in different communicative situations from a range of perspectives: choice, use, functions, and significance (Leppänen and Nikula 2008, 15-16). In the following section, I shall examine the linguistic situation within Finland from these perspectives.

## 2.3 English in Finland

The role of English in Finland has been extensively studied during the past ten years at the Centre of Excellence for the Study of Variation, Contacts and Change in English (VARIENG). In this section, I will use data from two of their publications to provide information about English in Finland: *Kolmas kotimainen –lähikuvia englannin käytöstä Suomessa*, edited by Leppänen, Nikula and Kääntä (2008), which focuses on the role of English from the perspective of different discourse situations, and *National Survey on the English Language in Finland: Uses, meanings and attitudes*, edited by Leppänen et al. (2011), which is a broader survey (random sample of 1495 subjects) on the use and functions of English in the Finnish society.

### 2.3.1 English in the Finnish society

The development and history of English in Finland is closely related with the sociocultural changes that have happened in the Finnish society during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. According to Leppänen and Nikula (2008, 17), the English language reached Finland in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and it became one of the foreign languages offered in Finnish schools in the 1920s. Since urbanization and modernization began to modify the Finnish society into a more prosperous western society between 1960 and 1990, the interest in English as a modern international language, and as a language of popular music and youth culture, grew (Leppänen and Nikula 2008, 18). Leppänen and Nikula (2008, 19) continue that by the 1990s, English had become the language of international communication, a position which was reinforced when Finland joined the European Union in 1995. In the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, globalization, the developments in communication technology, and global cultural trends have still reinforced the role of English as the most popular and well-known foreign language in Finland (Leppänen and Nikula 2008, 19).

Though the spread of English into Finland can be seen a part of the global spread of English, Finland has had its own reasons to adopt the language. Leppänen and Nikula (2008, 21) realize that English is regarded as an important international language, but for Finland, it also represents

modern western internationality. With the help of the English language, Finland has been able to identify itself as a western country and move away from the Swedish, German, and Russian cultural and political influence, under each of which Finland has been at one point of its history (Leppänen and Nikula 2008, 21).

The spread of the English language in Finland has been strongly associated with foreign language teaching, similarly to many other Expanding Circle countries, and the position of English in the Finnish language education system is strong: of those students who graduated from upper secondary school in 2013 nearly all (99.7%) had studied English (Official Statistics of Finland 2013). However, according to the National Survey (Leppänen et al. 2011, 103), there is still a group of Finns (15%) who have not studied English at all. The current linguistic situation in Finland is thus more complex than one would assume.

### ***2.3.2 Users of English***

According to the findings of the National Survey (Leppänen et al. 2011, 164-166), three types of English users can be found in Finland: the “*have-nots*”, the “*haves*” and the “*have-it-alls*”. The first group (the “*have-nots*”) consists of 6% of the respondents to the survey, and for them, English has little meaning (Leppänen et al. 2011, 164). These are monolingual speakers over 45 years old, most of who live in the countryside, have a low level of education, and are manual workers (Leppänen et al. 2011, 165). They have studied English for less than 5 years, they estimate their skills to be poor, and they do not use nor need the English language at all (ibid.). On the other hand, according to Leppänen et al. (2011, 164), for the group at the other end of the spectrum (the “*have-it-alls*”), English plays an important role in their lives. This group represents 16% of the respondents to the survey, and they are mostly young people or young adults, they live in urban areas, are highly educated, and work as managers or experts (Leppänen et al. 2011, 166). They have studied English for over 10 years, they know it well and use it frequently; many even see themselves as bi- or multilingual (ibid). According to Leppänen et al. (2011, 164-165), the largest group (the “*haves*”) consists of 78% of the respondents, and they are a more diverse group than the

other two. This group's relationship with the English language is characterized by the fact that although they have studied English for many years and know it reasonably well, they hardly ever use it (Leppänen et al. 2011, 165).

The role English has for the individual can thus be seen as indicating social welfare. According to Leppänen et al. (2011, 166), the people who are in frequent contact with the language have a high social status, whereas, the people who do not have access to the language may find themselves unable to better their social status. However, the situation may not be so polarized in the future as the younger population is, in general, better connected to the English language (Leppänen et al. 2011, 166). Nevertheless, the present situation is still far from a future where English is the third national language. Though the majority of the Finns rate their linguistic skills in English as relatively good and they are willing to use the language, in real language use situations they feel that their skills are inadequate (Leppänen et al. 2011, 104). They see themselves as monolinguals for who English is still a foreign language that needs to be mastered like a native speaker (ibid., pp. 162-163). The majority of Finns thus do not feel that English is their communicative resource but are highly dependent on the norms provided by the native models of the language, as is the situation in many Expanding Circle countries. However, according to Leppänen et al. (2011, 156), the importance of English in Finland will only increase in the future, and since the status of English is already high among the young people, the change towards a society where English can be considered a second language seems to be on its way.

For those Finns who use English, the contact situations where the language is used vary depending on the amount of English used. In the first type of contact situation, *a lingua franca situation*, the communication is mostly done in English; for example, in schools or companies where English is the chosen language of conduct (Leppänen and Nikula 2008, 23). In the second type of contact situation, *a bilingual situation*, both Finnish (or Swedish) and English are used, and in these situations the language has a social meaning or a discourse function; for example, in online chats or fan fiction (ibid.). The third type of situation is mostly conducted in Finnish, but the

speakers may use some English words or phrases; for example, in skateboard magazines, radio programs for young people, or videogames (Leppänen and Nikula 2008, 24).

In light of the studies on the different discourse situations, Nikula and Leppänen (2008, 422-423) identify several reasons for using English. English may be used purely for practical reasons: it may be the only mutual language between the speakers, or there may not be Finnish counterparts for certain terms (Nikula and Leppänen 2008, 422). According to Nikula and Leppänen (2008, 423), English can also be used for the formation of one's identity: it is used as a way to express expertise as well as to build social relations, and it is a factor which indicates belonging to one group and separation from another. In these situations, people choose to use English even though they could use their native languages; thus for them, English is no longer just a foreign language, instead, they claim the language for themselves by modifying it into a linguistic resource to serve their own interests (Nikula and Leppänen 2008, 16, 424).

### **3 Native and non-native in English language teaching**

Chapter 2 has demonstrated how English has spread globally and how it is being used in different parts of the world, including Finland. As a consequence of this language spread, the numerical strength has moved from the Inner Circle to the Outer and Expanding Circles. The estimations are that three fourths of the world's English speakers are non-native speakers, and as Crystal (2003, 69) puts it: "there is evidently a major shift taking place in the center of gravity of the language". As a result of this shift, many previously held notions of the language, its speakers, and its teaching are beginning to be questioned. In this chapter, I shall look at these effects: in Section 3.1, I shall examine how global English has affected the learning targets in foreign language teaching, in Section 3.2, I shall look at the difficulties that have arisen in defining native and non-native speakers, and finally in Section 3.3, I shall examine the effects on the English language teaching profession. In Section 3.3, I shall also turn to previous studies that have examined the native and non-native teacher issue from the perspectives of both the teachers and the students.

#### **3.1 Native and non-native norms as learning targets**

According to Kachru (1985, 17), the territories in the Expanding Circle do not exhibit linguistic varieties of their own but are instead dependent of the linguistic norms provided by the standard varieties of the Inner Circle. Thus, the relationship between the native (Inner Circle) and the non-native (Expanding Circle) English-speaking areas seems to be one that Phillipson (1992, 65) describes as "asymmetrical", there is no reciprocity; instead, all the norms and models flow from the Inner Circle outwards. Hence, the native speaker is the norm-provider and the non-native, especially in the Expanding Circle, the norm-dependent (Jenkins 2009, 16). This is especially evident in teaching of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in the Expanding Circle, where the teaching models and learning targets have to a large extent been designed according to native speaker norms (Kirkpatrick 2007, 184).

According to Kirkpatrick (2007, 184-5), the native speaker models have been chosen since these are prestigious, legitimate, and codified models, they are recognized and understood internationally, and there exists an ample amount of teaching material based on these models. However, while the native speaker models might suit those students who wish to learn Inner Circle norms and interact with speakers from the Inner Circle, for most learners of English “the native speaker model is both unattainable and inappropriate” (Kirkpatrick 2007, 189). Kirkpatrick (2007, 188) explains that, as a learning target, the native speaker model is unrealistic and since the students have no chance of obtaining this target, they will become discouraged and disillusioned. According to the findings of the National Survey on English Language in Finland (Leppänen et al. 2011, 89, 104), Finns do not appreciate their way of pronouncing English and feel that their linguistic skills are inadequate when communicating with native speakers, thus implying that Finns see the native speaker as the target of language learning and connect good linguistic skills with a native-like pronunciation.

The problem of using standard Inner Circle norms of the native speakers as targets and models in foreign language teaching is, according to Widdowson (1994, 386-7), one of *authenticity* and *authority*. Widdowson (1994, 386-387) argues that language teachers assume that they should use authentic language in the sense of naturally occurring language, instead of a language modified for pedagogic purposes, and at the same time, give autonomy to the learners by allowing them to interact with the language in a way that makes it their own. However, here exists a paradox: an authentic language cannot promote learner autonomy; instead, it imposes someone else’s authority, more precisely the native speakers’ authority (Widdowson 1994, 386). If an authentic language refers to the language naturally occurring in a communicative context, it contains cultural specific aspects which are accessible only to the native speakers, the insiders of the language, and the language is used to express their reality and identity. Therefore, the language becomes inaccessible to the non-native learners since they cannot assert ownership of it by manipulating the language to fit their reality and express their identity.

Kirkpatrick (2007, 189) suggests that instead of a native model, a model based on the local variety of English could be employed. This, however, is not an option in the Expanding Circle since local nativized models do not yet exist. Here, the focus of English is on the global, international use of the language with other non-native speakers, and hence, Kirkpatrick (2007, 193) has proposed that the model for teaching English could be based on the lingua franca use of the language. English language teaching would thus move away from teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) to teaching English as a Lingua Franca (ELF). For example Jenkins (2000) has been working on a description of the core features of English used in international communication (the lingua franca core), which could be used as a basis for language teaching. However, there does not exist a single lingua franca variety of English, and therefore, it would be better to employ what Kirkpatrick (2007, 193-4) describes as a lingua franca approach, which focuses on mutual intelligibility, cross-cultural communication, and communicative strategies. Widdowson (2003, 156, 162) adds that English language teaching should also be aware of the other languages present in the local context as well as the bi- and multilingualism of the learners.

These new views on English language teaching have also been acknowledged, to an extent, in the Finnish educational system. The National Core Curriculum for Basic Education 2004 states that one of the aims of English studies should be that the students will “learn to be aware of some key differences between the different variants of English” (Finnish National Board of Education 2004, 141). In addition, both in basic education and secondary education, multicultural, multilingual, and intercultural values and the promotion of these values are a part of the curricula as they are the targets for foreign language education stated in the Common European Framework of References for Languages, CERF (Council of Europe 2001, 2).

However, the Finnish foreign language education is still hanging on to native norms and native-like competence as learning targets. Even though the National Core Curriculum for Upper Secondary Schools 2003 only states that the student should “know how to communicate in a manner characteristic of the target language and its culture” (Finnish National Board of Education



2003, 102), the curriculum bases its objectives for teaching, learning, and assessment on CEFR, which in turn, uses the native speaker as a reference point in establishing and describing the objectives for linguistic competence. According to the framework, the student should, for example, be able to “interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with *native speakers* quite possible without strain for either party” and “sustain relationships with *native speakers* without unintentionally amusing or irritating them or requiring them to behave other than they would with a native speaker” (Council of Europe 2001, 74, 76; italics added).

Learning targets are closely related to the issue of native and non-native speakers as English language teachers since the choice of learning target and model might be an advantage to one teacher but a disadvantage to another. If the target is a native-like proficiency, the best English teacher might be a native speaker. Widdowson (1994, 387) sees that if authenticity is the target of foreign language education, the native speaker teacher has the advantage based on their native-speaker status and knowledge of the context where English is used; however, if the focus is shifted to learner autonomy, the advantage shifts to the non-native speaker teacher since they are more aware of the context of learning. What thus affects the choice of teacher is whether the focus of teaching English as a foreign language is on *English* or on *teaching a foreign language*.

### 3.2 Native speaker and non-native speaker

Before focusing on native and non-native English speaker teachers, it is necessary to examine the concepts of *native speaker* and *non-native speaker* more thoroughly. With the emergence of English as a global language, more attention has been paid to labels such as native and non-native speaker, and it has become clearer that both defining such concepts and applying them is becoming increasingly difficult, even to the point that some authors are questioning whether it is still valid to use these terms. The *Oxford English Dictionary (OED)* defines *native speaker* as “a person for whom a specified language is their first language or the one which they normally and naturally speak, esp. a person who has spoken the language since earliest childhood, as opposed to a person

who has learnt it as a second or subsequent language” (*OED Online*, s.v. *native speaker* n.). However, even the *OED* recognizes that the situation is not that simple: “The main use of the term among linguists is to identify a person who has an intuitive insight into the way a language is used; however, what criteria entitle a person to the description have been a matter of some debate” (ibid.).

Davies (2003, 210-211) has identified six characteristics used to describe a native speaker:

- (1) The native speaker acquires the L1 of which s/he is a native speaker in childhood.
- (2) The native speaker has intuitions (in terms of acceptability and productiveness) about his/her Grammar 1.
- (3) The native speaker has intuitions about those features of the Grammar 2 which are distinct from his/her Grammar 1.
- (4) The native speaker has a unique capacity to produce fluent spontaneous discourse [...]. In both production and comprehension the native speaker exhibits a wide range of communicative competence.
- (5) The native speaker has a unique capacity to write creatively [...].
- (6) The native speaker has a unique capacity to interpret and translate into the L1 of which s/he is a native speaker [...].

Davies (2003, 210) argues that a non-native speaker may become a bilingual native speaker if the target language is learned in early childhood before the critical age of acquisition, but this is unachievable for those learning a foreign language later in life. For those learners, becoming a native speaker is, according to Davies (2003, 212), possible but highly difficult since it is impossible for anyone to achieve all the other characteristics without extensive practice and contact.

It would seem then, that the most central criterion in describing a person as a native speaker is the age of language acquisition. Kramsch (1997, 363), however, is not so certain that native speakership is related only to language acquisition and linguistic skills; instead, “one must also be recognized as a native speaker by the relevant speech community”. In Kramsch (1997, 363) opinion, native and non-native speaker are concepts which can only be applied by those who have created the distinctions between the two. Davies (2003, 207) is on the same lines and sees validity in the terms in the sense that they are sociolinguistic constructions used for establishing and maintaining membership in a group. However, Kramch (1997, 363) argues that the prototypical

idealized native speaker is nothing more than “an imaginary concept”, an ideal which is increasingly difficult to apply to anyone in reality.

The concepts of native and non-native speaker have been mainly contested in the field of language teaching, as already seen with regards to models and learning targets. Cook (1999), for example, argues that the dismissal of such concepts and bringing the focus on the learners and the goals achievable to them would be far more beneficial in language teaching. In the context of foreign language teaching, the major issue with the terms native and non-native is that “as they are often associated with relative proficiency, they can be prejudicial” (Kirkpatrick 2007, 10). Kirkpatrick (2007, 8) sees that the problem arises from the assumption that people are most proficient in their first languages and cannot learn any subsequent language as well. This view is however challenged by the current multilingual contexts, where even the identification of a person’s L1 has become increasingly difficult (Kirkpatrick 2007, 9).

As a result of recent discussion and the fact that in an international and a multilingual context, ‘nativeness’ is not necessarily a viable concept, there have been attempts to find alternatives for the terms. For example, Jenkins (2009, 90) introduces a new three-way categorization of English speakers: *Monolingual English Speaker* (i.e. a person who only speaks English), *Bilingual English Speaker* (i.e. a person who speaks proficient English and some other language(s)), and *Non-Bilingual English Speaker* (i.e. a person who is not bilingually proficient in English but can communicate in it). In this categorization, the focus is on the speaker’s language proficiency instead of nativeness. Jenkins (2009, 90) herself argues that her categorization should “eventually lead to the end of discrimination against teachers of English on the ground that they are not ‘native speakers’ of English”. In conclusion, the core problem with the term *native* is that it implies the speaker to have greater language proficiency as well as innate ownership to the language, and since it is used mostly to refer to Inner Circle L1 English speakers, it leaves the proficient non-native speakers in a disadvantage just due to the fact that they are described as being non-native.

### 3.3 Native and non-native teachers of English

Kirkpatrick (2007, 10) is among those who see that the assumption of native speakers' superiority due to higher linguistic competence has also been extended to teachers of English and resulted in that native teachers are held better models and better teachers of English. Phillipson (1992, 193-199) sees that the assumption that native speakers make ideal English teachers is a long held view in the ELT (English language teaching) profession and calls this the *native speaker fallacy*. According to the assumption, native speakers are considered better teachers since they provide the best model for fluent, idiomatically appropriate, and grammatically acceptable language as well as understand the cultural connotations within the language, but as Phillipson (1992, 194) argues, all these qualities can be learned through good teacher training. Phillipson (1992, 195) continues that it may, in fact, be that non-native teachers make better English teachers if they themselves have learned English as a second language and are knowledgeable of their students' linguistic and cultural needs. This is exactly what Seidlhofer (1999, 238) sees as the non-native teachers' strength: they know what their students go through in learning a foreign language, and as they usually share their students' linguistic backgrounds, they know where the possible learning difficulties may arise from.

Seidlhofer (1999, 235) describes the non-native teachers as double agents, meaning that they have the knowledge of both the target language and its culture as well as the home language and the culture of the students. Seidlhofer (1999, 238) states that "[t]his shared language learning experience should thus constitute the basis for non-native teachers' confidence, not for their insecurity". What should be noted here is that although it would be impossible for native teachers to learn their L1 as a foreign language, what is often disregarded is that native teachers can also be competent in the local language and have had language learning experiences, and as a result, use these experiences in combination with their general knowledge of language learning to help the students' learning. In fact, Phillipson (1992, 195) states that the minimal requirement for a foreign language teacher should be experience in foreign language learning as well as in local languages

and cultures. In the list of requirement for an ELT teacher working in the Outer or Expanding circle, Kirkpatrick (2007, 195) emphasizes also the teacher's awareness of the current status of English around the world. The teacher should be knowledgeable in the spread of English and the development of different varieties as well as the status and functions of these varieties in different contexts (Kirkpatrick 2007, 195). Furthermore, the teacher should not promote any variety of English at the expense of the others and thus be critical of teaching materials as well as the targets set on students (ibid.).

### ***3.3.1 Teachers' self-perceptions***

Previous studies on teachers' self-perceptions have discovered that teachers themselves do indeed observe several differences between native and non-native English teachers. Based on the findings of an international survey on teachers' self-perceptions, Reves and Medgyes (1994, 361) argue that the native and non-native teachers differ from each other in terms of their teaching behavior. Furthermore, according to Reves and Medgyes (1994, 357), these differences in teaching behavior can be explained by the teachers' different levels of linguistic competence. However, in a study conducted in Spain, although the non-native teachers acknowledged having some difficulties with the English language, the teachers argued that these linguistic difficulties do not actually affect their teaching (Llurda and Huguet 2003, 227-228).

Reves and Medgyes (1994, 364) also argue that the teachers' linguistic skills are related to their self-confidence and self-image. In support of this claim, Seidlhofer (1999, 241) reports that a little over half of the non-native teachers taking part in her study in Austria said that being a non-native teacher made them feel insecure, and this insecurity was strongly linked to linguistic skills. However, a quarter of the teachers said that being a non-native teacher made them feel confident: these teachers gained confidence from the fact that they share their students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds and the experience of language learning (Seidlhofer 1999, 241). In fact, Hayes (2009), who studied non-native teachers in Thailand, and Shin and Kellogg (2007), who studied native and

non-native teachers in Korea, note that while native teachers might be native in the target language, the non-native teachers are indeed native in the learning context.

In order to confirm whether there actually exists differences in teaching behavior between native and non-native English teachers, Árvai and Medgyes (2000) conducted a study in Hungary in which they compared the stated behaviors of the teachers and their actual behaviors by analyzing the differences found between statements in the teachers' interviews and observations from classroom recordings. The classroom recordings confirm that native teachers have good linguistic skills, they are good at teaching conversational skills, their lessons have a relaxed atmosphere and incorporate more cultural aspects (Árvai and Medgyes 2000, 365-366). As for the non-native teachers, the recordings confirm that they are better at teaching grammar, they rely on the textbook, they exhibit more error correction and are stricter, and their lessons have little cultural contents; the recordings do not however confirm that the non-native teachers would use the students' L1 during the lessons (*ibid.*, p. 367). Though there were some discrepancies between stated and actual behavior, Árvai and Medgyes (2000, 368) conclude that the study still shows that there exists differences between the teaching behavior and the linguistic skills of native English teachers and non-native English teachers.

Nevertheless, these findings do not confirm that the students perceive any differences between native and non-native teachers or that these differences affect their teacher preference. After all, it is the students who are the target audience of the teachers, and only the students themselves can judge whether they think that either group of teachers is better. Therefore, I shall next present the central findings of previous research into native and non-native English teachers focusing on the students' perceptions of foreign language teachers working in the Expanding Circle.

Most of the Expanding Circle studies on students' perceptions of native and non-native English teachers have been conducted in Asia, including Jin (2005), Liu and Zhang (2007), Watson Todd and Pojanapunya (2009), Kasai et al. (2011), Rao (2010), and He and Miller (2011). A few have also been conducted in Europe, such as Benke and Medgyes (2005), Lasagabaster and Sierra

(2002, 2005), Ütsünlüoglu (2007), and Margić and Širola (2009). In addition to these, at least one study has examined the issue in the Middle East, Alseweed (2012). Several other studies both on students' and teachers' perceptions have been conducted in the Inner and Outer Circles; see for example, Tang (1997) and Cheung and Braine (2007) for Hong Kong; Samimy and Brutt-Griffler (1999), Liu (1999), and Beckett and Stiefvater (2009) for the United States; Ellis (2004) for Australia; and Pacek (2005) for Britain.

### ***3.3.2 Students' perceptions of native and non-native teachers***

Generally speaking, students perceive that native teachers have better linguistic skills. For example, in a study by Kasai et al. (2011) in Japan and Korea, native teachers were said to be more fluent in English and to have a better pronunciation. Likewise, Lasagabaster and Sierra (2005, 227) found out that the students in their study value the pronunciation of native teachers. Connected to the linguistic competence, native teachers have also been seen as better linguistic models and more capable of motivating students to speak (Benke and Medgyes 2005, 206). Not surprisingly then, a native teacher is preferred in teaching communicative skills (ibid.; Lasagabaster and Sierra 2005, 224). Furthermore, the linguistic skills of native teachers have been considered more authentic, and therefore, students feel that native teachers can provide more information about the subtle differences in the language (Rao 2010, 62). Perhaps related to the native teacher's more idiomatic understanding of the language, students have also been reported to prefer a native teacher in teaching vocabulary (Lasagabaster and Sierra 2005, 224; Kasai et al. 2011, 281).

Ütsünlüoglu (2007, 72) argues that in addition to communicative skills, the native English teachers are valued for their positive personality traits. The Turkish students taking part in Ütsünlüoglu's study (2007, 72) stated that native teachers are more cheerful, trustworthy, energetic, respectful, consistent, tolerant, sensitive, and easygoing. The students in Benke and Medgyes's study (2005, 204) also characterized native teachers positively: they are more outgoing, casual, and talkative. Similar results were also reported by He and Miller (2011, 436): native teachers are more active and open-minded. In addition to these personality traits, Benke and Medgyes (2005, 207) and

He and Miller (2011, 436) both discovered that in the students' opinion, native teachers are also more capable of creating a good, relaxed and conducive atmosphere. This finding was also confirmed by Kasai et al. (2011, 287) and Alseweed (2012, 47). Likewise, the Chinese students in Rao's study (2010, 63) thought that native teachers are able to initiate in-class interaction, however, this characteristic was linked to the use of new pedagogical methodologies.

Finally, students perceive knowledge of the target culture as one of the strengths in native teachers. Lasagabaster and Sierra (2005, 227) found out that the students value the native teacher's knowledge of English-speaking countries. Furthermore, the students in Rao's study (2010, 63) not only appreciated native teachers for their knowledge of different English-speaking cultures, but they also saw the teachers as embodiments of this culture, who can easily convey it to the students during the lessons. Accordingly, students have shown a preference for a native teacher also in teaching culture (Lasagabaster and Sierra 2005, 224; Kasai et al. 2011, 282).

In light of the above-mentioned studies, native teachers have better linguistic skills, they exhibit more positive personality traits, and have more knowledge about the target culture; hence, they are preferred in teaching oral skills, vocabulary, and culture. Nevertheless, students also recognize strengths in non-native teachers. These strengths relate to teaching skills, class management skills, and shared cultural and linguistic background.

According to Ütsünlüoglu (2007, 74), non-native teachers are appreciated for their teaching skills, which stem from their own experience as language learners. Thus, they are more capable of teaching learning strategies, provide more information about English, and are more empathetic towards the needs and difficulties of the students (Ütsünlüoglu 2007, 73). The students in Lasagabaster and Sierra's study (2005, 231, 225) also perceive knowledge of learning strategies and learning process as the strengths of non-native teachers and showed a preference towards the non-native teacher in teaching learning strategies. These findings were also supported by Alseweed (2012, 47), who found that the students in his study perceived non-native teachers to be more aware of the students' language needs and difficulties in English. Grammar is also a non-native teacher's



strength. According to Benke and Medgyes (2005, 206), students value non-native teachers for their ability to teach grammar and to help with grammar difficulties. Accordingly, a non-native teacher is preferred in teaching grammar (Lasagabaster and Sierra 2005, 225).

The non-native teachers' strengths also stem from their knowledge of local languages and cultures. For example, He and Miller (2011, 436) list knowledge of local languages, which means that the teachers can use the students' native language to explain things, familiarity with the local way of teaching and learning, as well as ability to teach translations skills as the strengths in non-native teachers. These characteristics were found in other studies as well: Benke and Medgyes (2005, 206) mention preparing students for exams and translation skills among the non-native teachers' strengths, whereas, the students in Alseweed's study (2012, 47) feel that non-native teachers are more conscious about the students' cultural background and learning styles. Bilingualism was also one of the strengths reported by Lasagabaster and Sierra (2005, 231).

A further strength in non-native teachers is their class-management skills. For example, the students in Ütsünlüoglu's study (2007, 71) thought that it is easier to understand non-native teachers and they speak more clearly. This finding was confirmed also by Alseweed (2012, 47), who reports that also the students in his study felt that non-native teachers explain lessons more clearly. According to Ütsünlüoglu (2007, 71), the Turkish students also thought that non-native teachers are stricter and more in control during the lessons. Likewise, non-native teachers were found to be more demanding, thorough, and traditional in Benke and Medgyes's study (2005, 204).

Non-native teachers are thus valued for their teaching skills, their ability to observe and help with learning difficulties, their knowledge of grammar, their experience in language learning, and their knowledge of local culture and language; whereas native teachers are valued for their linguistic skills, their positive personality traits, their ability to motivate and create a casual atmosphere, and their knowledge of the target culture. The weaknesses observed by the students were related to these strengths: one teacher's strength was the other one's weakness. The students in Lasagabaster and Sierra's study (2005, 229) felt that intelligibility, along with teaching skills and

monoligualism, are the native teachers' weaknesses. According to the students in Benke and Medgyes's study (2005, 206-207), they also had difficulties understanding the teacher and thought that native teachers are unable to explain grammar. Furthermore, Rao (2010, 63-65) lists insensitivity to students' linguistic problems, unfamiliarity with the local cultural and educational system, and a conflict between the teachers' teaching style and the students' learning styles as the native teachers' weaknesses. On the other hand, using too much Hungarian during lessons, poor pronunciation, and outdated language are the weaknesses of non-native teachers according to the Hungarian student in Benke and Medgyes's study (2005, 206). Pronunciation was clearly the biggest weakness of non-native teachers also according to Lasagabaster and Sierra (2005, 232).

### ***3.3.3 Students' teacher preference***

As mentioned above, students generally preferred a native teacher in teaching oral skills, vocabulary, and culture; whereas a non-native teacher was preferred in teaching learning strategies and grammar (see Benke and Medgyes 2005, Lasagabaster and Sierra 2005, and Kasai et al. 2011). Previous studies have also examined the students' overall preference. The results of the studies are not however completely compatible as some of the studies have given the students only two alternatives (native and non-native) while others have provided them with three alternatives (native, non-native and both).

Alseweed (2012) and Liu and Zhang (2007) only had two alternatives, and while the majority of the students in Liu and Zhang's study (2007, 163) thought they could learn better from a non-native teacher who shared their linguistic background, the majority in Alseweed's study (2012, 47) would choose a course taught by a native teacher. Lasagabaster and Sierra (2005, 223) also discovered that most of the students prefer a native teacher over a non-native one; though when given the third alternative, the majority would have both. This result was also confirmed by Benke and Medgyes (2005, 208) and He and Miller (2011, 434), who reported that the majority of the students would prefer both teachers. However, many of the students in He and Miller's study (2011, 436) expressed the opinion that the students' level of English proficiency should be taken into

consideration: a native teacher might be best for students with higher proficiency and a non-native teacher (or both) for beginners. According to Lasagabaster and Sierra (2005, 225), also the students in their study indicated that the preference for a native teacher increases with the educational level.

In addition to the studies presented so far, there have also been studies that have examined the issue of students' perceptions and preferences from a certain perspective. Watson Todd and Pojanapunya (2009) conducted a study in Thailand in which, in addition to investigating students' attitudes towards native and non-native teachers, they examined whether the implicit attitudes of the students differed from the explicit ones. They found out that even though the students explicitly preferred a native teacher, implicitly there was no preference, and furthermore, the students implicitly felt warmer towards the non-native teacher (Watson Todd and Pojanapunya 2009, 30).

Margić and Širola (2010) conducted a study in Croatia in which they examined how a course in English as a global language changes university students' perceptions about issues such as English as an International Language (EIL), non-native varieties, and native speaker norms. The study demonstrated that exposure to concepts of EIL and non-native varieties has a positive impact on the students' level of openness to these issues (Margić and Širola 2010, 135). Of the students who had not attended the course, one third disagreed with the statement that the native teacher would be more competent between two teachers who have equally good teaching skills; whereas more than half of the students who had attended the course disagreed (*ibid.*, p. 133). However, even after the course one third of the students still thought that EIL should be based on native speaker norms, native varieties are better than non-native varieties, and that the best teacher is a native speaker (*ibid.*, p. 135).

Jin (2005) has also studied how raising students' awareness of issues related to the global status of English affects their perceptions and especially their preference of teacher. The subjects were Chinese university students who were attending a lecture on World Englishes and issues related to native and non-native varieties and norms (Jin 2005, 41). The results indicate that the lecture had a slight influence on students' preference, and the factor which related to preference was

norms: acceptance of native norms related to native teacher preference; whereas awareness of EIL made students more willing to be taught by non-native teachers (*ibid.*, p. 45).

In addition to educational level, linguistic skills, and awareness of issues related to global English, the effects of students' previous experiences with native English teachers on their teacher preferences have also been examined in previous studies. Lasagabaster and Sierra (2002, 134) report that the findings in their study suggest that there is a significant correlation between previous experiences and general teacher preference: those students with previous experiences with native teachers were more likely to also prefer a native teacher. On the other hand, Watson Todd and Pojanapunya (2009, 31) report that previous experiences had little effect on the students' attitudes towards the teachers. According to Watson Todd and Pojanapunya (2009, 31), this discrepancy in the results might result from the differences in the nature of the previous experiences.

Though there has been an increase in the amount of research into native and non-native matters, no studies have been conducted in Finland concerning students' preference for native or non-native teachers. As Kasai et al. (2011, 288) argue, these studies are to an extent context dependent and situational, and therefore, the findings of the previous studies cannot be generalized to hold true in every country. For example, the linguistic situation, the educational system, and the social context are quite different when comparing Finland and China, even though both countries belong to the Expanding Circle. In general, most of the studies presented here have focused solely on university students, with the exception of Benke and Medgyes (2005) and Kasai et al. (2011), who also incorporated students from secondary education. However, since previous studies (see Lasagabaster and Sierra 2005) have shown that the students' preference towards the teachers might be related to educational level, more research on different educational levels is needed. Furthermore, the studies have presented several interesting factors which deserve further study, such as the effect of certain background factors on preference: for example, linguistic skills (see He and Miller 2011), previous experiences with native teachers (see Watson Todd and Pojanapunya 2009), awareness of issues related to global English (see Margić and Širola 2010; Jin 2005).

## 4 Methodology

In order to examine students' perceptions of native and non-native teachers of English in Finland, an empirical study was designed with the objective of achieving meaningful data from the students. However, before I can present and discuss the findings obtained from that data, it is necessary to examine the chosen methodology in more detail. The present study was conducted as a survey distributed to upper secondary school seniors in five upper secondary schools in Tampere. The data for this study thus consists of the students' answers to an online questionnaire. In Section 4.1, I will discuss the survey method and describe the questionnaire used in the study, in Section 4.2, I will examine the data and the subjects, and finally in Section 4.3, I shall briefly explain how the study was conducted and the data analyzed.

### 4.1 Survey

Since there have not been earlier studies on students' perceptions about native and non-native English teachers in Finland, it was necessary to choose a method that would allow to examine the general situation in Finland; thus, the survey method was chosen. According to Karjalainen (2010, 11), a survey does not necessarily provide information about the reality of the real world, but instead, it is a way to explore the perceptions and views of people. As is clear from examining previous research in other countries, the survey is the most used method in the studies concerning students' perceptions of native and non-native English teachers. A survey provides general information on the issue, and it can be used to easily gain responses from a substantial number of subjects. A survey is also useful for examining the correlations between students' perceptions and background factors.

The survey for the present study was conducted via an online questionnaire, which was created and published by the browser based application *Eduix E-lomake 3.1*<sup>1</sup>. An electronic online questionnaire was chosen for two main reasons. Firstly, the objective of the study was to reach as

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<sup>1</sup> "Eduix E-lomake 3.1", accessed 23 April 2014, <https://e-lomake.fi/web/>

many subjects as possible, and by using an electronic questionnaire available online, the distribution, answering, and data collection was quick, paperless, and could be done electronically anywhere and anytime. The online questionnaire also meant that schools could send it to all their seniors, not just the ones who happened to have English courses at the time of the study. Secondly, the data obtained from the electronic online questionnaire could be transferred directly without coding to a statistical program for analyzing. In addition, the raw data was easily maintained and transported since it was electronically stored.

The questionnaire itself consists of five sections and has in total 45 questions (see Appendix 1 for the original questionnaire in Finnish and Appendix 2 for the English translation). Question 1-4 formed the first section of the questionnaire, “Background information”, and its purpose was to obtain some basic information about the subjects: their first language(s), the duration of their English studies, their stays in English-speaking countries, and their interest in learning English. Questions 5-16 formed the second section of the questionnaire, “Linguistic skills”. The first part of this section (questions 5-7) asked the students’ to evaluate their English skills from different perspectives. This type of self-evaluation has also been used in other surveys, and in fact, questions 6 and 7 were adapted versions of questions 22 and 23 used in the *National Survey on the English Language in Finland* (Leppänen et al. 2011). The second part of the section (questions 8-16) consisted of statements regarding the subjects’ use of English and their views on language learning targets as well as on the definition of linguistic competence. These statements help to determine whether the students have become aware of issues related to global English and hence, provide an answer to the first research question:

1. How do Finnish upper secondary school students perceive the learning targets of EFL, the current role of English in the world, and the different varieties of English?

The third section (questions 17-21), “Different Englishes”, aimed to examine explicit attitudes towards different varieties of English and give additional answers to the first research question. These questions were again modified versions of questions (15 and 18) used in the National Survey

(Leppänen et al. 2011), and their purpose was to discover which variety of English was the most appealing and the most unappealing according to the students as well as examine their feelings towards *Finnish English*. This term, though not yet established, is used for example in the National Survey (Leppänen et al. 2011) to refer to the English spoken with a Finnish accent.

The fourth section of the questionnaire, “Native and non-native teachers of English”, primarily focused on the main research questions:

2. How do Finnish upper secondary school students perceive the native and non-native teachers of English? What are their strengths and weaknesses?
3. Do Finnish upper secondary school students show a preference towards native or non-native EFL teachers? Why? Why not?

Questions 27-41 consisted of statements related to the strengths and weaknesses of both teachers indicated by previous studies. Questions 42-45, on the other hand, focused on the students’ preference and the most important qualities in English teachers. In addition to these questions, the fourth section also asked about the students’ experiences with the teachers: questions 23-26 examined the students’ previous experience with native and non-native teachers, and question 22 asked about the nativeness of the students’ current teacher. The answers for these questions, along with some of the information gained from the second section, provide an answer for the fourth research question:

4. Are some background factors related to the Finnish upper secondary school students’ choice of preference (i.e. students’ linguistic skills, their views on learning targets, or the students’ experiences with the teachers)?

The fifth and final section of the entire questionnaire gave the subjects the opportunity to elaborate and explain their answers and give feedback if they wished to do so.

The questionnaire was designed in a way that it would give different types of information on the research questions; therefore, different types of questions were used. The different question types also meant that the questionnaire could be structured in a way that the altering question types

made it more reader friendly. Most of the questions were closed questions, though there were two open-ended questions (questions 43 and 44: reasons for preference and most important quality in an English teacher). The closed questions were either multiple choice questions or scale questions. Most of the scale questions were Likert scales, and the subjects were asked to indicate on a 4 point scale how strongly they agreed or disagreed with a given statement (1 – strongly disagree, 2 – somewhat disagree, 3 – somewhat agree, 4 – strongly agree). They were also given a fifth alternative of *no opinion* (or *cannot say* would be the exact translation of the Finnish phrase *en osaa sanoa*). Karjalainen (2010, 22) notes that two things should be acknowledged about the subjects who choose this option: firstly, it can be chosen by those with a neutral opinion or by those who do not have an opinion since they are not familiar with the issue, secondly, it is also tempting as an alternative since the subject can choose it without considering the issue too profoundly. In order to discourage subjects with a neutral opinion to choose this alternative, it was the final alternative on the scale as opposed to being in the middle.

## **4.2 Data and subjects**

The data for this study consists of the responses that were obtained by the online questionnaire. The respondents were senior-year upper secondary school students, and thus, they represent the subjects of the study. Upper secondary school students were chosen since the focus of the study is on foreign language teaching and subject teachers of English (as opposed to class teachers or professors). The senior-year students have the most experience of all the students both of foreign language teaching and the teachers; moreover, their experiences are recent, hence, they are the best subjects to evaluate the current situation. In addition, previous studies (Lasagabaster and Sierra 2005; He and Miller 2011) suggest that there might be a difference in preference between different educational levels, and since most of the studies on the issue of native and non-native teachers of English have been conducted with university students, more information on upper secondary school students' perceptions is needed.



Before moving on to describing the subjects and schools involved more precisely, a remark on the educational terminology is necessary. In the Finnish context, secondary education is organized into two different forms: vocational upper secondary education and general upper secondary education, each lasting for approximately three years and making students eligible to higher education (Ministry of Education and Culture). The students attending secondary education are mostly between the ages of sixteen and nineteen (Ministry of Education and Culture). The focus of this study is on general education and on the schools providing this, which are in Finnish referred to as *lukio* (singular form). The English equivalent used by the Finnish educational bodies is *upper secondary school*, and thus, this shall also be the term used in this study to refer to the schools providing general upper secondary education.

The present study was conducted in Tampere. There are eleven general upper secondary schools in Tampere and one upper secondary school for adult students. Altogether there are approximately 3200 students in the eleven schools, plus another 800 adult students, and in the spring of 2012, roughly 1450 students graduated from the different upper secondary schools in Tampere (City of Tampere 2014). Tampere was chosen as the site for this study since it was of a suitable size: the sample would be a good representation of the subjects without biases towards one student type or another. Moreover, the upper secondary schools in Tampere are good representatives of Finnish upper secondary schools in general. According to the national comparison of Finnish upper secondary schools, which gives the schools grades and ranks them based on the grades obtained by the students in the matriculation examinations, in 2013 the average grade for upper secondary schools in Tampere (23.4) was closer to the national average (23.7) than it was in Helsinki (24.5), Turku (25.9) or Oulu (23.0) (MTV3 2013a-e).

The preliminary objective was to distribute the questionnaire in nine upper secondary schools and obtain 400 responses. Three upper secondary schools were thus excluded from the study already in the beginning since they would introduce several unnecessary background variables: Tampere upper secondary school for adults was excluded since the students are of varying ages and

educational backgrounds, Swedish comprehensive school was excluded because of the students' different linguistic background, and Tampere Rudolf Steiner school for its different pedagogical methods. A request to participate in the study was then sent to the nine schools and in the end, five upper secondary schools were able to take part. Though the number of schools participating was lower than expected, the five participating schools represent well the general situation since they are distributed evenly on the ranking list of Finnish upper secondary schools; two of them are above the national average, two of them are below it, and one represents the average (MTV3 2013a).

Since the number of participating schools was only five, the number of responses was also lower than originally hoped. The final number of respondents was 183. One factor that could have also contributed to the lower than expected number of respondents, was the fact that the survey was conducted online, and possibly, a more structured way of collecting the data (e.g. all students answering the questionnaire during one of their English lessons) could have resulted in more responses. However, this would have taken time from their English lessons and would have required more time and organization both from the researcher and the teachers, and in the time frame of the present study, this was not possible. For the current study, the number of responses means that the results cannot be directly generalized to represent the whole of Finland, but as this is the first study conducted in Finland on this issue, it will nevertheless shed light on the situation here and serve as a starting point for future research. In the future, it will thus be possible to conduct a large scale study with more respondents from different cities around Finland or a small scale case study with in depth interviews with fewer subjects.

### 4.3 Data collection and analysis

The data consisted of 183 responses to an electronic online questionnaire sent to senior-year upper secondary school students in five upper secondary schools in Tampere. Before the questionnaire was distributed, it went through three preliminary checks. Firstly, it was checked for design and technical functioning. Secondly, the language in the questionnaire was checked. The questionnaire was in Finnish in order to ensure that the students could understand the questions as there might not be a teacher present when they answer the questionnaire. Finally, the questionnaire went through a pilot-test, in which three senior-year upper secondary school students answered the questionnaire and commented on the questions. One of the questions was changed after this: the alternative “*I am currently taught by a native and a non-native teacher*” was added to question 22.

After the questionnaire passed these checks and was ready, a link and a message asking the students to answer the questionnaire were first sent to the schools, and from there they were forwarded to the students. The schools and teachers were able to distribute the link as they wished either during the lessons, through *Wilma* (an online software used for communication between the teachers, students and parents), or as a part of a feedback questionnaire. The responding was voluntary, and therefore, the teachers were instructed to remind their students a few times to answer the questionnaire. The students were given general information about the broad focus of the study (English language and its teaching) both in the message sent to them and in the questionnaire. In the beginning of questionnaire the students were also instructed to answer according to their opinion, and they were given general definitions of the terms *native* and *non-native*.

The questionnaire was open for December 2013 and January 2014, and during this period, the students were able to answer the questionnaire where and whenever suitable for them. As mentioned above, this type of online data collection method was chosen since it was the easiest and quickest way to distribute the questionnaire to hundreds of subjects and collect the data from them; paradoxically, it was also partially because of this method that the number of responses was not as high as hoped. Since it was voluntary to answer the questionnaire and there generally was not a pre-

arranged time for all students to answer the questionnaire, not all chose to answer it. This may also affect the results somewhat since one could imagine that motivated and accomplished students would be more eager to answer these types of questionnaires on their free time.

In order to analyze the data, the students' answers were exported from e-lomake 3.1 to *Microsoft Excel 2010*. First stage of data analysis was to calculate the frequencies and relative frequencies for the closed questions (see Appendix 3). In order to calculate the frequencies for the open-ended questions (question 43 and 44), the different answers were first listed and then semantically assigned to broader categories. The data that was obtained from the questionnaires can be measured either on the nominal level, meaning that the data is qualitative in nature and refers to groups or classes, or on the ordinal level, meaning that the data can be organized to an order based on the measured quality (Karjalainen 2010, 20-21). This means that only frequencies and relative frequencies could be calculated for all the data sets; however, means were calculated where appropriate. In order to examine whether there were any links between the students' teacher preference and the background factors chosen to be studied, the statistical program *IBM SPSS Statistics 20* was used. Since the data represented nominal and ordinal levels, the association between the variables was calculated by cross-tabulation and using the *contingency coefficient C* (Karjalainen 2010, 122).

## 5 Results

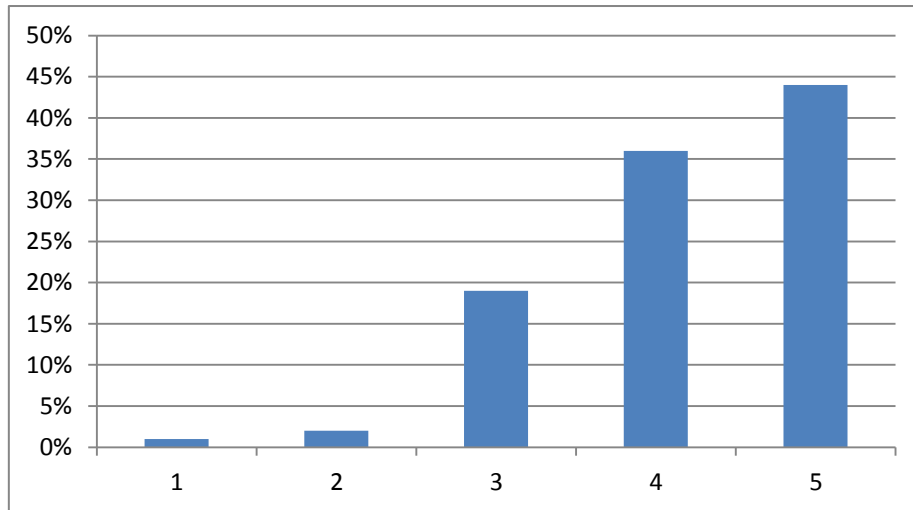
The questionnaire produced a fair amount of data to be analyzed, and in this chapter, I shall present the results of that analysis. The questionnaire used in this study as well as the summaries of the results can be found in the appendices. I will begin this chapter by presenting the linguistic background of the subjects (i.e. the senior-year students,  $n=183$ ): that is, their primary languages, English studies and experiences, and linguistic skills. In Section 5.2, I will move on to examining the students' views on issues related to global English, such as learning targets and different varieties of English. Finally, I shall focus on the students' perceptions of the teachers of English. I will firstly discuss the findings related to previous experiences, perceived strengths and weaknesses, and preference in Section 5.3, and then in the final section, Section 5.4, turn the focus to possible factors correlating with preference. I shall provide a brief summary of the results after each section, but further discussion shall be conducted in Chapter 6.

### 5.1 Students' background information

Questions 1-3 examined the basic linguistic background of the students, focusing on their primary languages, the length of their English studies, and whether they had stayed in any English-speaking countries. Most of the students were monolingual Finnish speakers ( $n=173$ ); however, there were five bilingual Finnish speakers and five students who said their L1 was other than Finnish. The majority of the students ( $n=133$ ) had begun their English studies on the third grade as is customary in Finland; 31 students had begun their studies on the fourth grade and 19 before the third grade. Only 16 students had stayed in an English-speaking country for more than three months, and most commonly the stay was a part of an exchange program into an Inner Circle country, which lasted approximately one year.

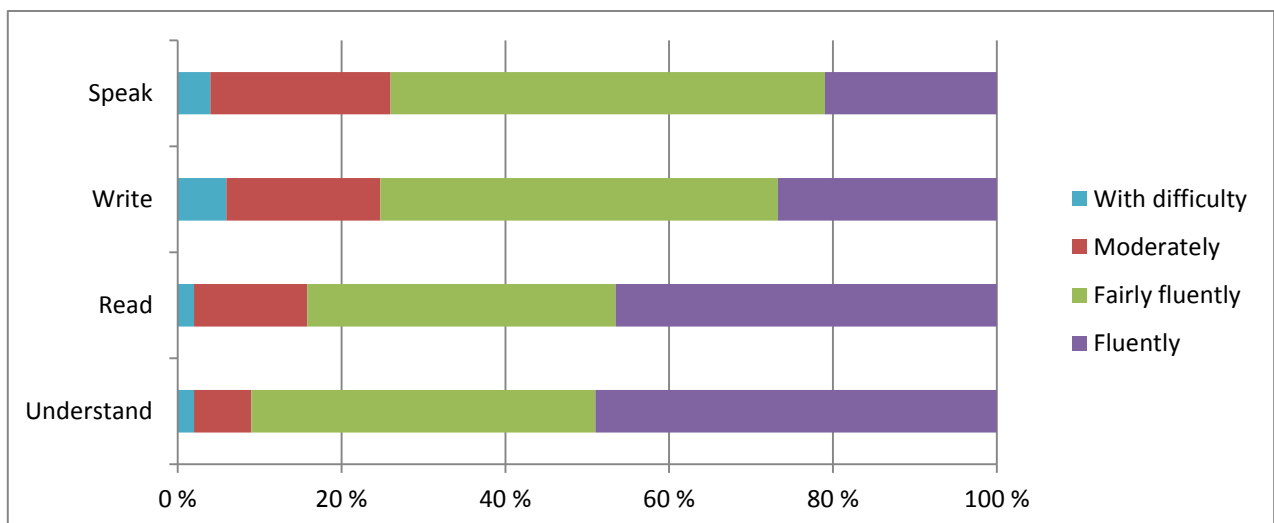
Most of the students have thus gained their English skills in Finland, most likely as part of formal education although it might be the case, that some have also learned English in informal settings outside the school (e.g. through media or via personal contact). In order to reveal how

motivated the students were to learn English, question 4 asked them to rate their interest from 1 (not interested) to 5 (very interested). Table 1 illustrates that the students rated their interest high. The average of the all the ratings was 4.2 suggesting that students are in fact motivated to learn English.



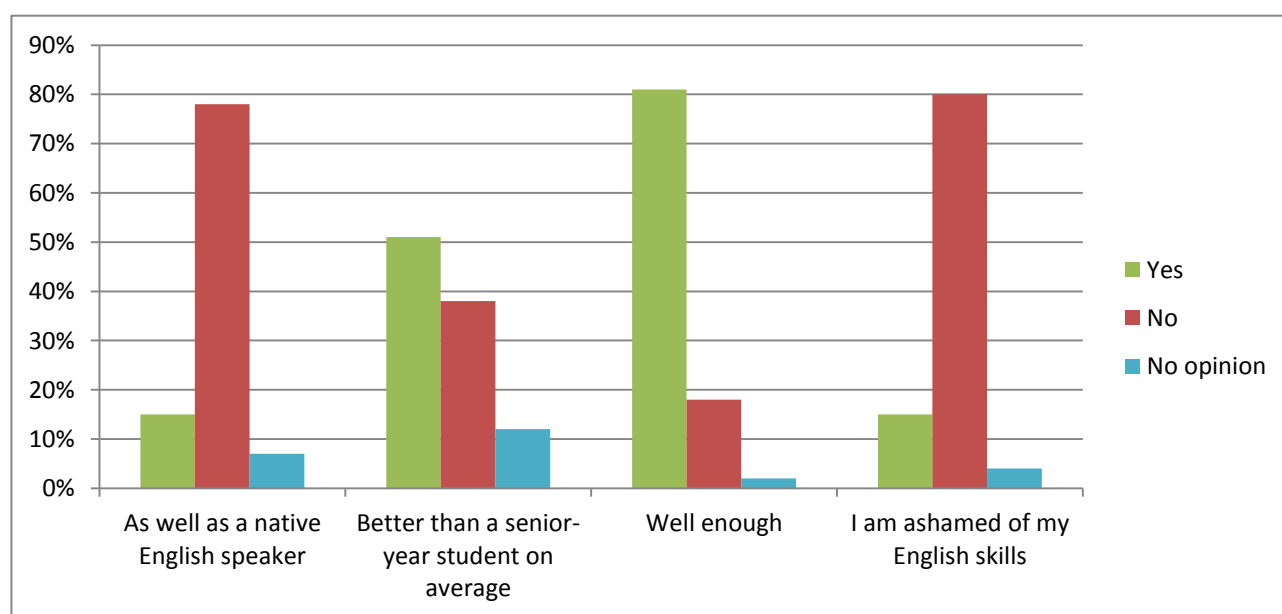
**Table 1.** Students' interest in learning English (1 not interested – 5 very interested).

In order to examine the students' linguistic skills in English, the students were asked to rate their overall English proficiency, their proficiency in terms of different linguistic skills, and their skills in comparison to other speakers' skills (questions 5-7). Table 2 illustrates the proficiency ratings in terms of different linguistic skills showing that the receptive skills (reading and understanding) in English were rated slightly better than the productive ones (speaking or writing).



**Table 2.** Students' English proficiency in different linguistic skills.

The majority of the students had confidence in their skills. In terms of overall English proficiency, 28% rated their skills as *excellent*, 49% as *good*, 19% as *moderate*, and only 3% as *poor*. Table 3 also shows that the majority of the students (81%) felt they knew English well enough and were not ashamed of their English skills (80%). Approximately half of the students (51%) also felt that they knew English better than a senior-year high school student on average, and 15% felt that they knew English as well as a native speaker.



**Table 3.** Students' description of their linguistic skills.

The results seem to suggest that the majority of the students have good English skills, and though they might have trouble with some aspects of the language, they are content with their skills. However, there seems to be two other groups as well: one with excellent linguistic skills in all areas, who feel that their skills match those of the native speakers, and another group with poorer linguistic skills, who feel that their skills are not good enough.

## 5.2 Students' views on issues related to global English

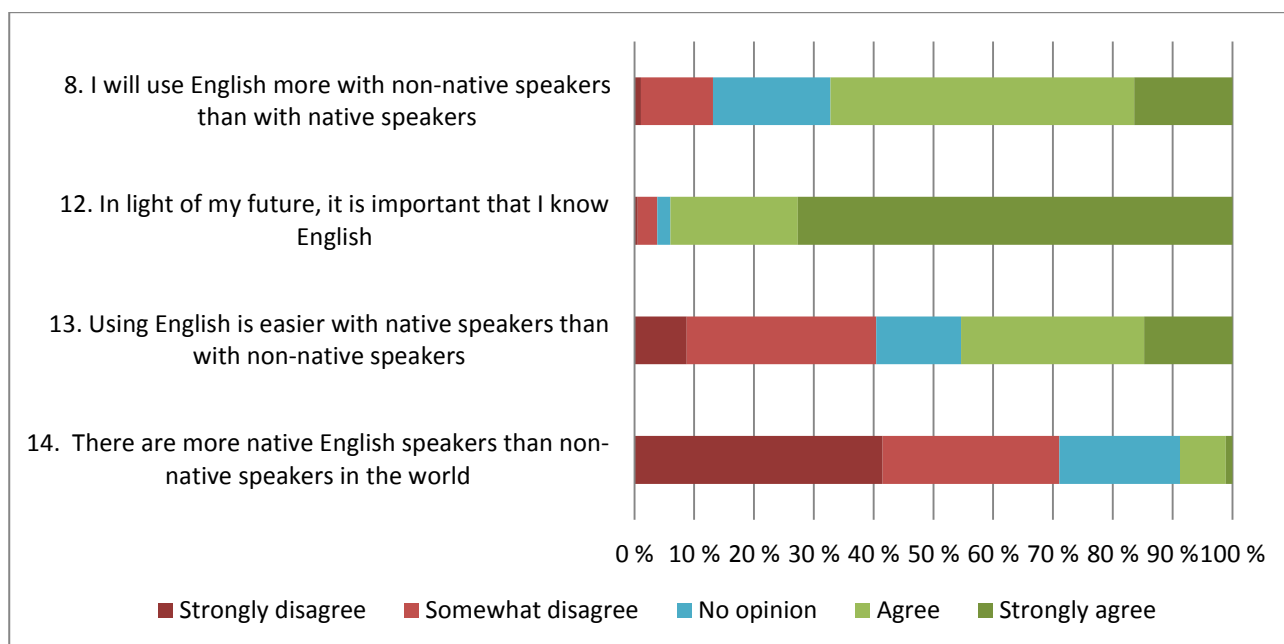
The results of the previous section show that the students were interested in learning English, and on a general level, they gave high ratings for their linguistic skills. The next section then examines whether the students are aware of issues related to the global role of English. Questions 8-16 related to the students' future use of English, the nature of language proficiency, native and non-native speakers, and learning targets; whereas questions 17 and 18 related to the different varieties of English and questions 19-21 to Finnish English in particular.

### 5.2.1 *Speakers, learning targets, and the use of English*

Questions 8-16 consisted of statements, and the students were asked to rate whether they agreed or disagreed with a given statement on a four-point scale (1 – strongly disagree, 2 – somewhat disagree, 3 – somewhat agree, 4 – strongly agree). In order to provide a clearer view of the students' opinions, the answers will be presented in two sets: *agree* and *disagree*. However, exact frequencies and relative frequencies to each alternative are given in the summary of the results (see Appendix 3). All four alternatives are also illustrated in the tables, where the two “disagree” options are presented with different shades of red and the two options for “agree” are presented with different shades of green (blue is used to represent “no opinion”).

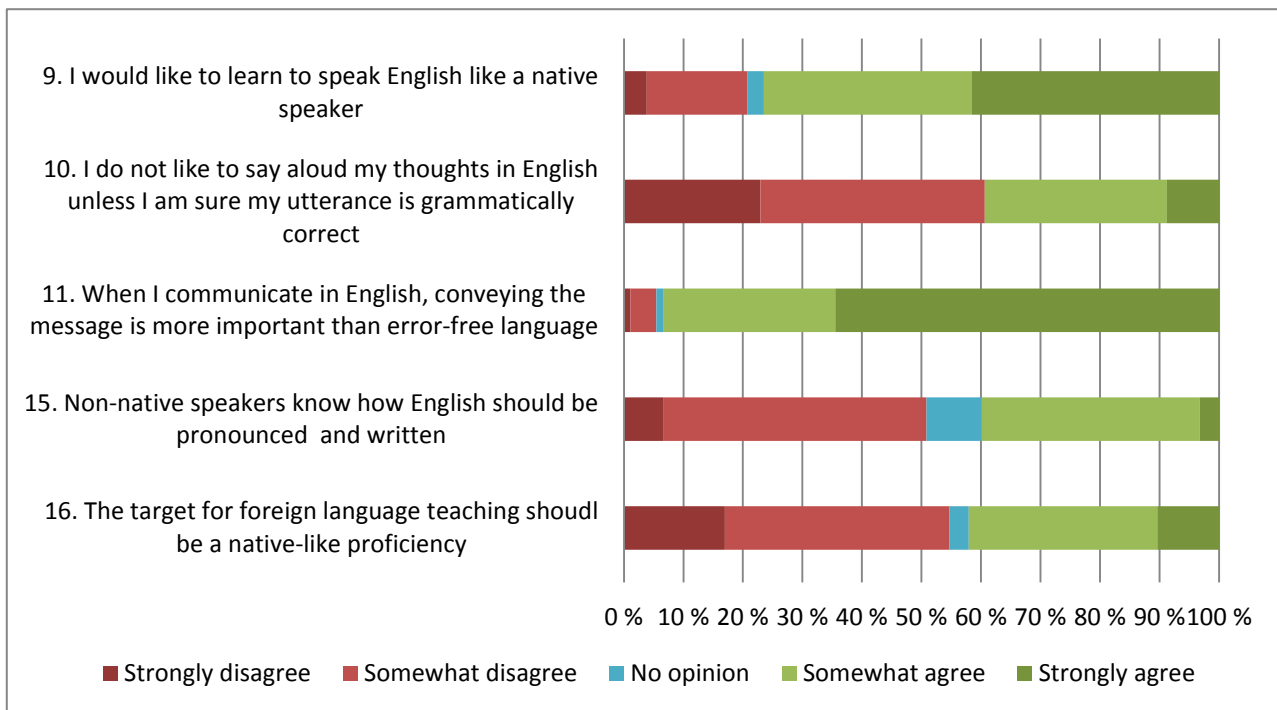
As already stated, the students' were motivated to learn English, and nearly all of them (94%) agreed that it will be important to know English in the future (see Table 4, page 44). The majority of the students (77%) also agreed that in the future, they will use English more with non-native speakers than with native speakers (20% had no opinion). However, the students' opinions were more divided when asked whether it is easier to use English with native speakers than it is with non-native speakers: 46% agreed that is easier to use English with native speakers; whereas 41% disagreed with the statement. When asked about the present number of native speakers versus non-native speakers, 9% thought there were more native English speakers, but the majority (72%) thought there were more non-native English speakers; 20% did not know or did not want to guess.





**Table 4.** Students' ratings to statements concerning their future use of English and its speakers.

The students' views on the nature of language proficiency and learning targets proved interesting since the answers seemed to be contradictory at places (questions 9-11, 15-16; see Table 5, page 45). Nearly all of the students (94%) agreed that when communicating in English, conveying the message is more important than error-free language. The majority of the students (61%) also disagreed with the statement *I do not like to say aloud my thoughts in English unless I am sure my utterance is grammatically correct* (question 10). However, 40% indicated that they feel uncomfortable speaking English unless they knew what they said was grammatically correct, and furthermore, a majority of the students (77%) agreed that they wanted to learn to speak English in a way that would make them sound like native speakers. As for the question on the non-native speaker's English competence, 40% agreed that a non-native speaker knows how English should be pronounced and written; whereas 51% disagreed. The views on learning targets were also divided since 42% agreed that the learning target of foreign language teaching should be a native-like proficiency, whereas, 55% disagreed with the statement.

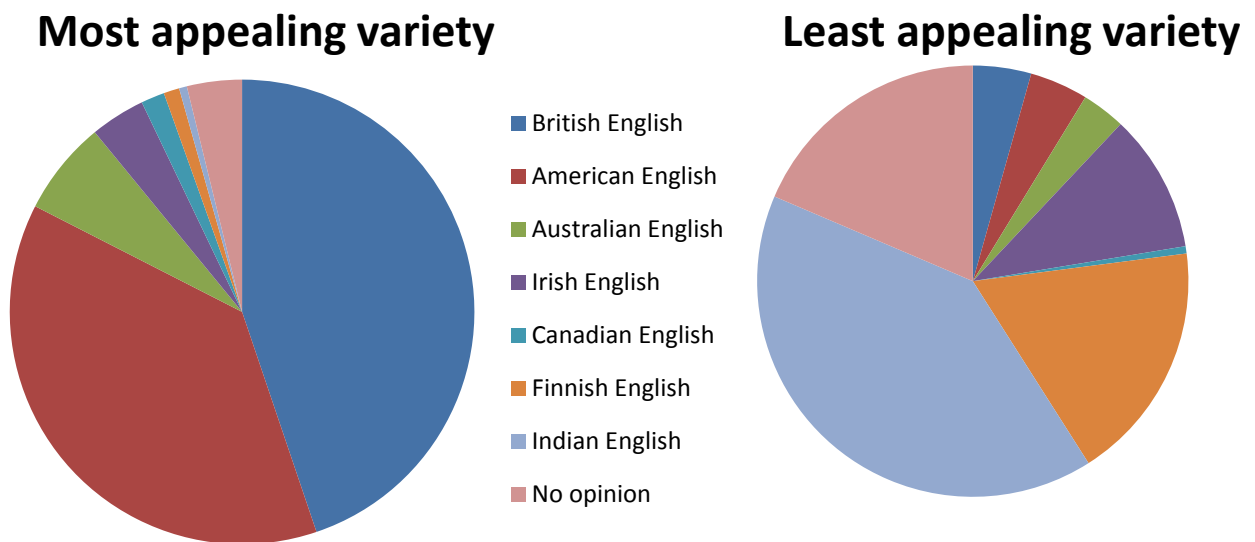


**Table 5.** Students' ratings to statements concerning their use of English and learning targets.

To sum up, the students are well-motivated to learn English, and they are aware of their need for the language in the future. Most of the students predict that they will be using the language more with non-native speakers, who form the majority of English speakers globally also in the students' opinion. In addition, the students emphasize the content of the utterance as opposed to grammatical accuracy, and nearly half of them think non-native speakers can also judge how to speak and write English. However, most of the students wish to sound like native speakers, and almost half of them think using English is easier with native speakers. Likewise, the opinions on learning targets were not unanimous: almost half of the students thought native-like proficiency is a good target; whereas a little over half disagreed.

### 5.2.2 Different varieties of English

In order to further investigate the students' views about English, the students were asked to name the most appealing and the least appealing variety of English (questions 17 and 18; see Table 6). Two varieties rose above the rest as most appealing, and these were British English (45%) and American English (38%). This is probably not that surprising as they are the most well-known, and accepted, varieties. The least appealing variety proved to be more difficult to choose. Indian English was chosen most often (40%), then Finnish English (18%) and Irish English (10%); however, 19% of the students did not choose any of the alternatives.



**Table 6.** The most and least appealing varieties of English.

The students' views on Finnish English were examined more thoroughly by a set of questions asking the students to evaluate how they feel when they hear a famous Finn speaking English on TV either poorly, fluently but with a Finnish accent, or fluently, like a native speaker (questions 19-21). When a famous Finn spoke English poorly, the feelings were mostly negative: *Amusement* (33%), *Sympathy* (27%) and *Embarrassment on behalf of Finns* (16%) were the alternatives that were chosen most frequently. When a Finn spoke English fluently with a Finnish accent, the students had mostly positive or neutral feelings: *Pride in Finns* (27%), *No feeling at all* (25%) or *Admiration for the speaker* (24%) were the most frequent ones. However, some negative feelings

were also expressed as 14% said they felt *Amusement* when hearing a Finn speak with a Finnish accent. The majority of the students felt very positively towards a famous Finns speaking fluently, like a native speaker: *Admiration for the speaker* (52%) and *Pride in Finns* (27%) were the most frequent feelings with the neutral option *No feelings at all* (16%) being the third frequent option. The students thus seem to appreciate good linguistic skills, and though approximately half of the students felt positively towards English being spoken with a Finnish accent, the students seem to appreciate native-like fluency the most.

### **5.3 Students' perceptions of teachers**

The remaining questions (questions 22-45) focused on the main topic of the study: students' perceptions of native and non-native teachers of English. The first set of questions concentrated on the students' experiences with the teachers, the second set consisted of statements related to preference and perceived strengths and weaknesses, and finally, the remaining questions centered on preference and the most important qualities in English teachers. Here, I shall first present the results on the students' experiences, then focus on the qualities of the teachers, and lastly turn my attention to preference.

#### **5.3.1 Previous experiences**

The answers to the questions about the nativeness of their past and present English teachers (questions 22-23) show that the majority of the students have only had experiences with English teachers who are non-native English speakers: only 8% were studying with a native teacher or both teachers at the moment, and only 29% had ever had a native English speaker teacher (see Table 7, page 48). The majority (90%) of the students who had had previous experiences with native teachers agreed that the experiences had been positive, and the same was true with non-native teachers (93% of the students agreed; questions 24 and 25). More than half of the students (60%) thought that the nature of these previous experiences did affect their learning (question 26).

<i>Have you had native English speaker teachers?</i>		
Yes	No	Total
53	130	183
29%	71%	100%

**Table 7.** Previous experiences with a native English speaker teacher.

The questions on previous experiences, however, proved to be somewhat problematic. The number of students who stated in question 23 that they had not had any experiences with native teachers was 130 (see Table 7); however, the number of students claiming the same in question 24 was only 113 (see Table 8). The problem most likely arose from the wording in the questions, and those seventeen students who gave seemingly contradictory answers probably have had native teachers in other subjects and answered question 24 according to these experiences. Thus, they read question 24 as relating to teachers in all subjects not solely in English. The results of the question do not however drastically change when the seventeen contradictory answers are omitted from the data (see Table 9). The majority of the students who have had previous experiences still agree that those experiences have been positive, although the percentage now rises slightly from 90% to 94%.

Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	No experience	Total
2	5	14	49	113	183
1%	3%	8%	27%	62%	101%*

\* the percentage is 101 due to rounding

**Table 8.** Previous experiences with native teachers have been positive (all responses).

Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	No experience	Total
1	2	7	43	113	166
1%	1%	4%	26%	68%	100%

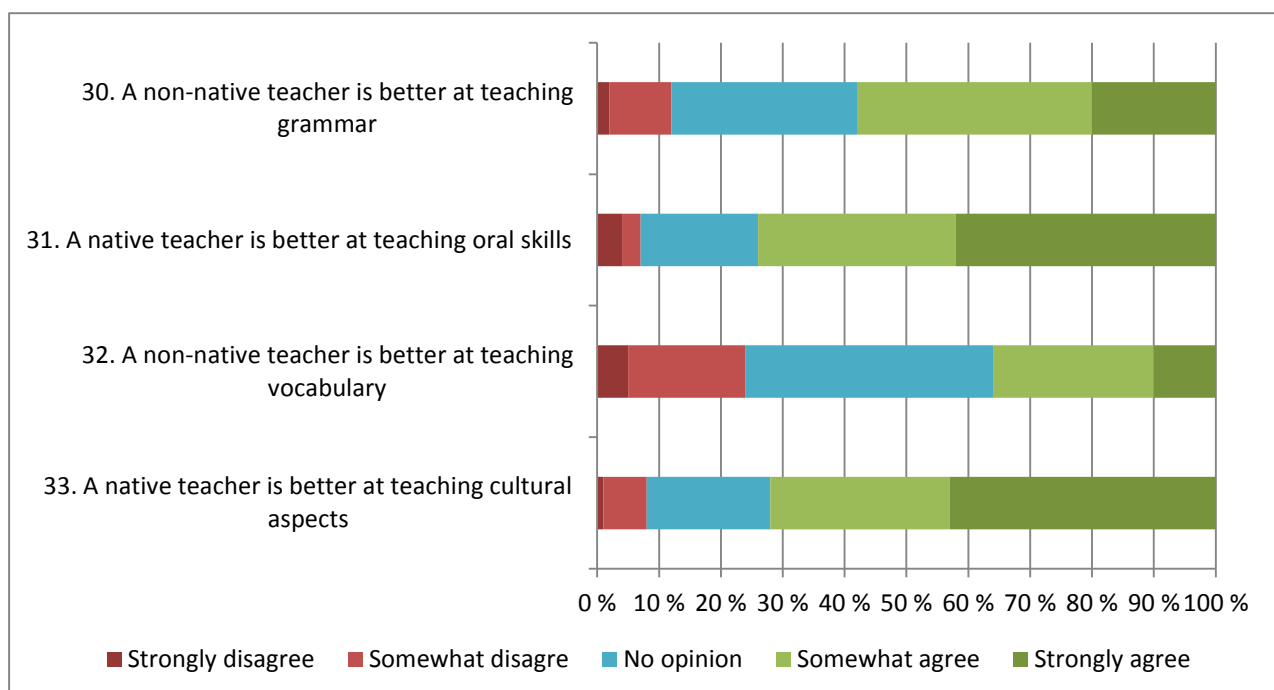
**Table 9.** Previous experiences with native teachers have been positive (partially omitted results).

Furthermore, in question 25 concerning the experiences with non-native teachers, ten students chose the answer *I have not had any experiences*; however, this seems very unlikely. It might be the case that the students chose this option because they did not have an opinion on the matter or

because they did not want to answer the question for one reason or another. The questionnaire was designed in a way that it did not allow questions to be left unanswered, which meant that the students had to select an alternative for each question in order to be able to save their answers and complete the questionnaire.

### 5.3.2 *Perceived weaknesses and strengths*

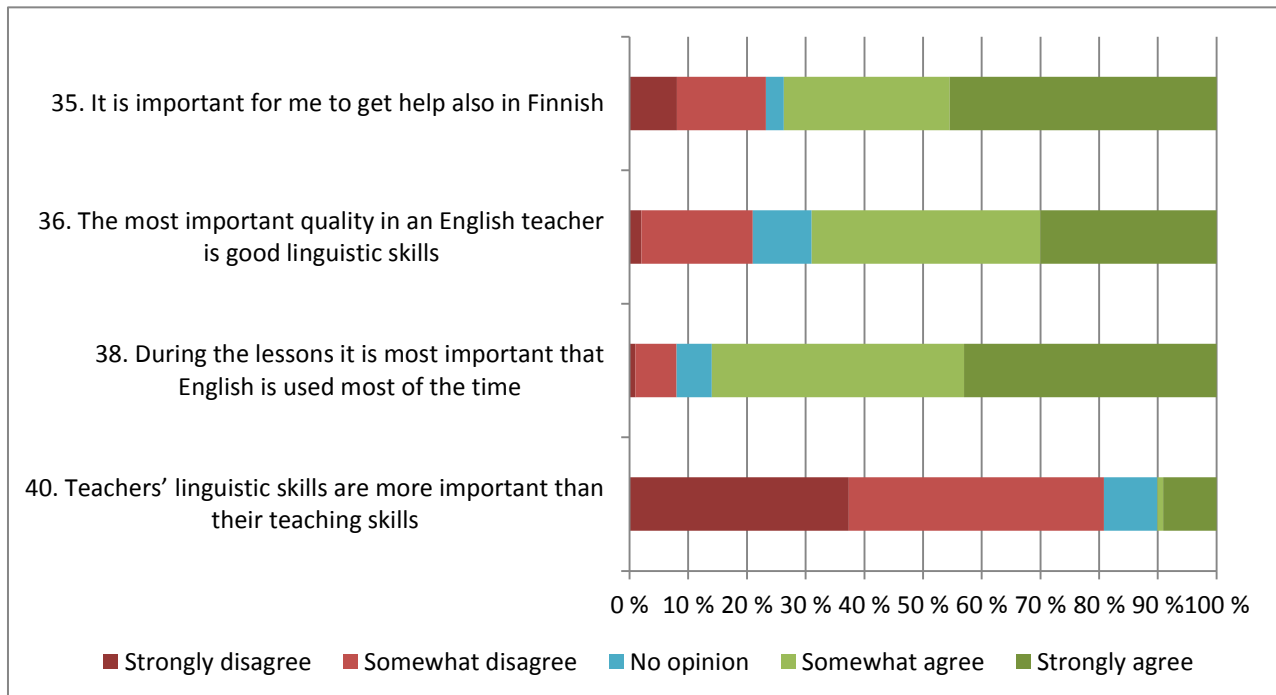
The students' views on teachers' qualities were examined from several perspectives. Questions 30-33 focused on the teaching of specific linguistic skills (grammar, oral skills, vocabulary, and culture); questions 35-41 consisted of statements related to important qualities in an English teacher and whether the students perceive the teachers to have certain weaknesses and strengths; and finally, questions 44 and 45 examined the most important qualities in an English teacher. The statements about teaching different linguistic skills (questions 30-33) proved to be challenging for the students as the amount of students who did not express any opinion ranged from 19% to 40% depending on the question (see Table 10).



**Table 10.** Teachers' strengths in teaching specific linguistic skills.

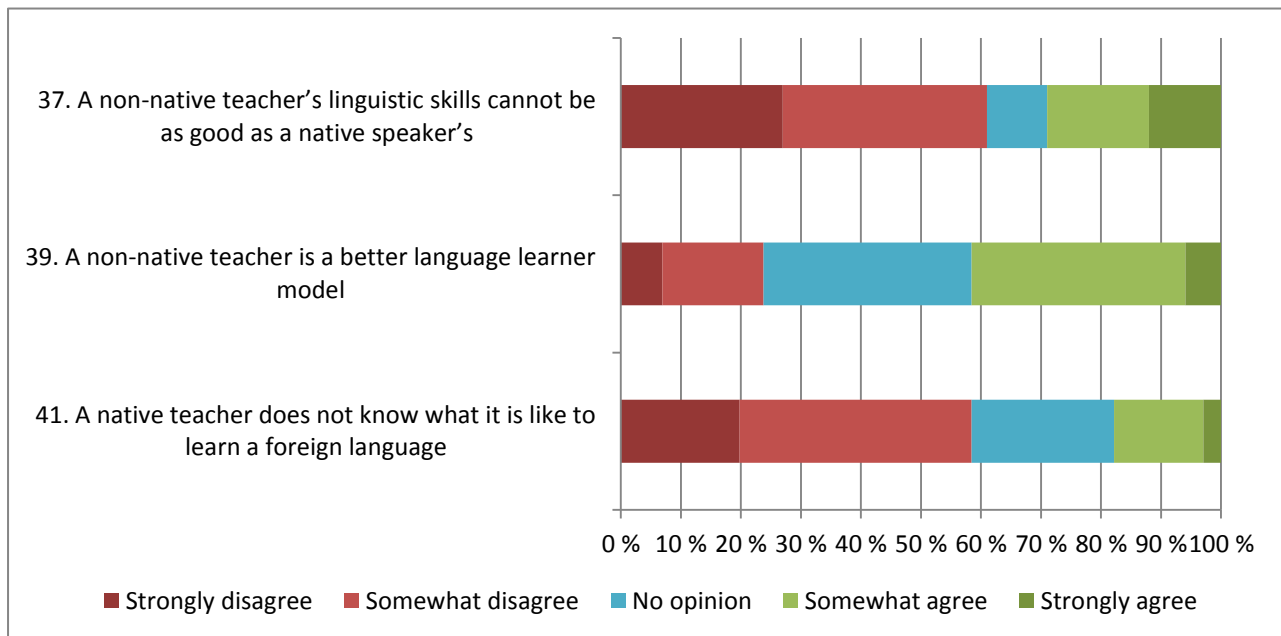
The most difficulties were with the statement *A non-native teacher is better at teaching vocabulary* (question 32), where the majority of the students (40%) had no opinion. As for those students who expressed an opinion, 60% agreed with the statement and 40% disagreed, further demonstrating that teaching vocabulary was difficult for the students to assign to either teacher. The students' views on the teaching of the remaining skills were more unanimous. When examining the views of those students who expressed an opinion, 83% agreed that a non-native teacher is better at teaching grammar, 91% agreed that a native teacher is better at teaching oral skills, and 90% agreed that a native teacher is also better at teaching cultural aspects.

Questions 35, 36, 38 and 40 concentrated on good qualities in an English teacher (see Table 11). The majority of the students (78%) agreed that it is important for them to get help also in Finnish but during the lessons, it is most important that English is used most of the time (86% agreed). The majority of the students (69%) agreed that the most important quality in an English teacher is good linguistic skills. However, perhaps somewhat contradictory, the majority (80%) did not agree that a teacher's linguistic skills are more important than their teaching skills.



**Table 11.** Good qualities in an English teacher.

As for the qualities most often assigned to the teachers (linguistic skills for native teachers and foreign language learning experience for non-native teachers; see Table 12), the majority of the students (61%) disagreed with the statement *A non-native teacher's linguistic skills cannot be as good as a native speaker's* (question 37). This was also the case with the statement *A native teacher does not know what it is like to learn a foreign language* (59% disagreed; question 41), suggesting that non-native teachers can also have good linguistic skills and a native teacher can be an experienced language learner. Another challenging question for the students was question 39: *A non-native teacher is a better language learner model*. The majority agreed with this statement (42%), but 35% did not express an opinion (24% disagreed).



**Table 12.** Native and non-native teachers' perceived strengths and weaknesses.

Question 44 asked the students to state what the most important quality in an English teacher is, taking into consideration their personal learning path. As this was an open-ended question, the students were able to state any qualities they wished. Question 45 asked them to then mark whether this quality was found in a native teacher, in a non-native teacher, or in both. In order to analyze the answers for the open-ended question, the qualities were listed and then assigned into broader semantic groups. In the list below, the frequencies for the groups are given in brackets along with



the labels *B*, *NNT* and *NT*. These labels indicate whether the qualities in a particular category were assigned to *both teachers* (B), *non-native teachers* (NNT), or *native teachers* (NT). It should be noted that some students listed more than one quality, which accounts for the discrepancy between the number of students and the number of qualities (n=183/ n=276). The qualities were assigned into sixteen different categories. Qualities that were mentioned only once and do not fit any other category are in category 15; all the other categories have qualities that were stated by at least two students. Most frequently the students mentioned qualities related to teaching skills, and therefore, to provide a more explicit list of the qualities, this category was further divided into subcategories:

1. *Teaching skills* (71: B, NNT, NT)
  - i. *in general* (40: B, NNT)
  - ii. *teaching specific linguistic skills* (17: B, NNT, NT)
  - iii. *employing specific teaching methods* (14: B)
2. *Linguistic skills* (35: B, NT, NNT)
3. *Motivating and inspiring* (33: B, NNT, NT)
4. *Clarity; able to explain things clearly* (21: B, NNT)
5. *Encouraging* (17: B)
6. *Learner-oriented; treats everybody equally but is considerate towards students with different skill levels* (17: B, NNT, NT)
7. *Understanding and supportive* (16: B, NNT)
8. *Patient* (11: B, NNT)
9. *Positive/friendly/nice* (11: B, NNT, NT)
10. *Provides versatile teaching* (8: B, NNT)
11. *Social/talkative* (6: B)
12. *Knows Finnish and the language learning experience for a Finn* (3: NNT)
13. *Stern and demanding to a degree* (3: B)
14. *Creates a casual learning atmosphere* (2: B)
15. *Other positive characteristics* (12: B, NNT)
16. *No answer* (10: B, NT)

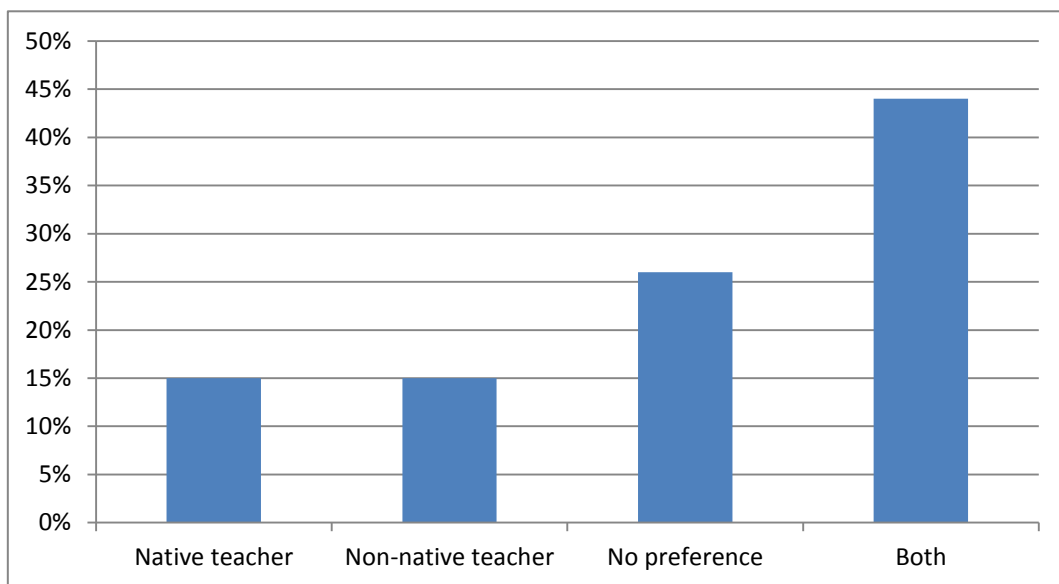
The most important quality in the students' opinion was teaching skills, either in general or specifically the teaching of a certain method or skill. The second most important quality was linguistic skills, and seventeen students specified that a teacher should have good communicative and pronunciation skills. An English teacher should also be motivating, clear, encouraging, learner-oriented, understanding, patient, and nice, just to name a few qualities. With regard to the conflicting results on teachers' linguistic skills and teaching skills in the previous section, where students agreed with the statement *The most important quality in an English teacher is good linguistic skills* (question 36) but disagreed with the statement *Teachers' linguistic skills are more important than their teaching skills* (40), the results of the open-ended question seems to confirm that, in fact, teaching skills are more important than linguistic skills.

The majority (78%) of the students thought that the most important quality they had mentioned could be found in both teachers. Not surprisingly then, due to the number of qualities assigned for both teachers, these qualities were the most versatile appearing in all categories except one: category 12 (knowledge of Finnish). This category contained qualities that were said only to be found in the non-native teacher. Altogether 16% of the students thought that the quality they had stated could only be found in a non-native teacher, and as a whole, these qualities were quite varied appearing in eleven of the categories. Only 6% of the students thought that their stated quality could solely be found in the native teacher, and the scope of these qualities was much narrower: they appeared only in seven categories.

### 5.3.3 Preference

Students' preference was elicited in two different ways. In addition to asking the students' preference with scale questions (questions 27-29), where they either agreed or disagreed with the given statements, a multiple choice question (question 42) also enquired their preference with the alternatives *native teacher*, *non-native teacher*, *both* and *no preference*. The students were also asked to provide reasons for their choice (question 43).

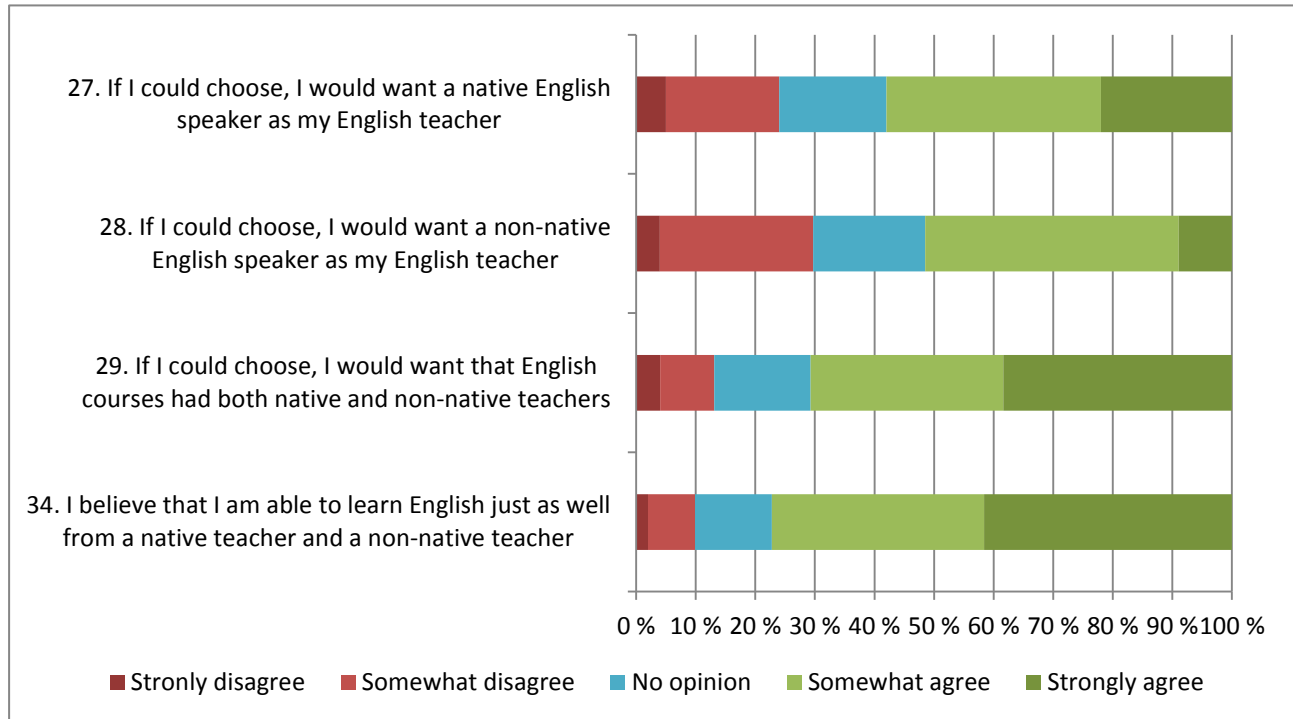
The majority of the students (44%) chose *both* teachers (see Table 13). The alternatives *native teacher* and *non-native teacher* were both chosen by 15% of the students. However, the students were also given the alternative *no preference*, which proved to be more popular than either native or non-native teacher with 26% of the students choosing this alternative.



**Table 13.** Students' preference for an English teacher.

The results for the statement-questions show a similar pattern (see Table 14, page 55). The number of students agreeing with the statements *If I could choose, I would want a native English speaker as my English teacher* (question 27) and *If I could choose, I would want a non-native English speaker as my English teacher* (question 28) showed no clear difference as 58% agreed with the statement related to native teachers and 52% agreed with the statement related to non-native teachers. However, the statement *If I could choose, I would want that English courses had*

both native and non-native teachers (question 29) was more agreed upon with 70% of the students agreeing with the statement. The majority of the students (78%) also agreed that they are able to learn English just as well from a native teacher and a non-native teacher (question 34).



**Table 14.** Students' ratings to statements considering teacher preference.

Question 43 was an open-ended question that asked the students to provide reasons for their choice of preference. Similarly to question 44, it was analyzed by listing the reasons and categorizing them semantically into broader groups. The groups with only one reason formed along with empty answers the category "*Other*". The frequencies for each category of reasons are given in brackets in the lists below. Here again some students provided more than one reason, and thus, the number of reasons and the number of students choosing a specific preference might not match.

The majority of the students (n=80) had stated that they would wish to be taught by both native and non-native teachers, and altogether they gave 85 reasons for this choice. The majority of the reasons stated that both teachers had their own strengths, and while some students gave a more detailed account on the perceived strengths, others made only a general statement. In total, the

reasons for choosing both teachers were classified into five categories, and the first category was further divided into four subcategories:

1. *Both have their own strengths* (36)
  - i. *generally speaking* (13)
  - ii. *in teaching different linguistic skills* (12)
  - iii. *NS: linguistic skills; NNS: knowledge of Finnish and language learning* (9)
  - iv. *in teaching different courses* (2)
2. *Teaching would be versatile and different* (21)
3. *Teachers will be able to provide different points of view* (13)
4. *Teachers' first language does not affect learning* (2)
5. *Other* (13)

The second most frequently chosen alternative concerning teacher preference was *no preference* (n=47), and the majority explained their choice by stating that the nativeness of the teacher does not matter. All the reasons (n=47) were assigned to four categories, and again the first category was further divided into four subcategories:

1. *Nativeness of the teacher is not an determining factor for me* (21)
  - i. *generally speaking* (10)
  - ii. *good teaching skills more important* (6)
  - iii. *good teaching skills and good linguistic skills more important* (4)
  - iv. *other* (10)
2. *Both have their strengths and can be equally qualified* (16)
3. *No experience-based knowledge on the differences* (2)
4. *Other* (8)

*The native teacher* and *the non-native teacher* gained the same amount of support from the students when asked about teacher preference: both were chosen by 28 students. While the categories for the reasons for choosing both or having no preference were broad and contained different types of reasons, the categories for the reasons relating to native teacher and non-native

teacher preference are more explicit. The reasons (n=36) for choosing a native teacher were divided into eight categories:

1. *Students have to use English during the lessons* (6)
2. *A native teacher can help those students with strong English skills to deepen their skills and make fine adjustments* (6)
3. *A native teacher has better knowledge of culture and is better at teaching culture* (5)
4. *A native teacher is better at teaching oral skills* (5)
5. *A native teacher has better or more reliable linguistic skills* (4)
6. *A native teacher has a better or more authentic accent* (2)
7. *Previous experiences with native teachers have been positive* (2)
8. *Other* (6)

The reasons (n=32) for choosing a non-native teacher were divided into five categories:

1. *A non-native teacher knows Finnish (can help and explain in Finnish)* (13)
2. *A non-native teacher understands language learning from the Finnish perspective* (6)
3. *A non-native teacher is more relatable, a good language learner model* (4)
4. *A non-native teacher is better at teaching grammar* (2)
5. *Other* (7)

To sum the results on students' perceptions and teacher preference, the majority of the students preferred to be taught by both teachers, and this was evident in the statement-questions as well as in the explicit question about preference. The students felt that this way they would be able to benefit from both teachers' strengths, get versatile teaching, and gain different perspectives. The strengths the students provided in the open-ended questions were aligned with the students' opinions regarding the teaching of different linguistic skills: the non-native teacher had strengths in teaching grammar and the native teacher in teaching oral skills and culture. One of the students, for example, stated in the open-ended question regarding the reasons for preference that:

- (1) A non-native can teach grammar more easily because the teaching would be in his/her native language. With a native it might be easier to learn to speak and learn about culture because he/she has personal experience. [my translation]

Teaching vocabulary was only mentioned by three students in the open-ended question, with two students seeing it as the non-native's strength and one student as a native teacher's strength. This was also reflected in the statement-questions: 40% of the students could not assign this to either teacher. Teaching vocabulary is thus not a clear strength of either teacher, though a small majority of those with an opinion would prefer a non-native teacher. Other strengths mentioned by the students were linguistic skills with the native teacher and knowledge of Finnish and language learning with the non-native teacher. In the statement-questions, the students also agreed that language skills were important in a teacher and that it was important to get help in Finnish.

Approximately one in four students stated that they have no teacher preference. In their view nativeness of the teacher did not matter, rather they thought that good teaching skills and linguistic skills were more important. One of the students gives, for example, this reason for no preference:

- (2) I don't think that the teacher's mother tongue has a great significance in terms of learning, rather teaching skills. [my translation]

Others stated that both have their strengths and can be as qualified:

- (3) Both are most likely as qualified and both teachers have their strengths considering the student. [my translation]

The majority of the students also agreed that they can learn just as well from both teachers. Furthermore, the students also felt that a non-native teacher can have equally good linguistic skills as the native teacher and a native teacher can also be an experienced foreign language learner.

The minority of the students showed a preference to either a native teacher or a non-native teacher. The reasons related to choosing a native teacher reflected on the strengths of the teacher already mentioned, such as linguistic skills and teaching culture and oral skills. In addition, the native teacher was seen as the better alternative for those students with already strong English skills, as is clear from this example from a student:

- (4) I feel that a native teacher has more to offer for an advanced English student, especially in terms of pronunciation, making fine adjustments, and cultural knowledge. [my translation]

Furthermore, the native teacher was preferred since it would force the students to use English during the lessons, an aspect of language lessons which was seen as important by nearly all of the students. As for those who preferred non-native teacher, the reasons again reflected the non-native teacher's strengths: knowledge of Finnish, an insight into language learning in the Finnish context, and teaching grammar:

(5) Since he/she perhaps understands better my way of thinking and why I don't understand certain grammar things when I mix them with Finnish. [my translation]

A few students also felt that they could relate more to a non-native teacher as a language learner model. In the statement-questions a majority also agreed that a non-native teacher would make a better language learner model.

## 5.4 Correlations

In order to examine whether there were any links between students' certain background factors and their choice of preference for an English teacher, cross-tabulations between the two were created and correlations calculated using the contingency coefficient (C). As already mentioned in Section 4.3 on data analysis, this method was chosen since it works best with nominal and ordinal data (Karjalainen 2010, 122). When the correlation calculation provides the contingency coefficient a C-value of more than 0.3, there is a significant correlation, whereas, if the C-value is less than 0.2, there is no correlation (ibid.).

Altogether five background factors were studied: (1) students' English skills, (2) students' view on learning targets, (3) nativeness of their current teacher, (4) experience with a native English speaker teacher, and (5) nature of previous experiences with both native and non-native teachers. These background factors were chosen since they have either been studied before or previous studies have suggested that there might be a correlation between a certain factor and students' preference (see Lasagabaster and Sierra 2002, 2005; He and Miller 2011; Watson Todd and Pojanapunya 2009; Margić and Širola 2010; Jin 2005). These background factors form the columns in the cross-tabulation tables, whereas, the teacher preference groups form the rows. The students were



divided into four different groups based on their teacher preference: those who preferred a native teacher (hereafter the *NT-group*), those who preferred a non-native teacher (*NNT-group*), those who preferred both teachers (*B-group*), and those who showed no preference (*NP-group*). The cross-tabulations illustrate whether there exist differences between the teacher preference groups when examining the different background factors.

It should however be noted that the sample size of the current study was not large enough for an extensive correlation study (for example for a chi-square test), and thus, the results presented here are not definite. They do nevertheless reveal tendencies and provide a base for further research. In this section, I shall present the results for each background factor individually and comment whether any correlations were found. It should also be noted that the tables for symmetric measures are not presented; for all cross-tabulations and symmetric measures see Appendix 4.

#### 5.4.1 Students' English skills and teacher preference

In order to examine students' English skills and teacher preference, a cross-tabulation was made between question 5 (overall English proficiency) and question 42 (teacher preference). Table 15 illustrates the results.

Teacher preference	Overall English proficiency				Total
	Poor	Moderate	Good	Excellent	
Native teacher (NT)	0,0%	10,7%	42,9%	46,4%	100,0%
Non-native teacher (NNT)	7,1%	25,0%	53,6%	14,3%	100,0%
Both (B)	2,5%	16,2%	57,5%	23,8%	100,0%
No preference (NP)	4,3%	25,5%	36,2%	34,0%	100,0%
Total	3,3%	19,1%	49,2%	28,4%	100,0%

**Table 15.** Cross-tabulation: teacher preference and overall English proficiency.

These results seem to suggest that those students who preferred a native teacher rated their English skills higher than the rest. In addition, those students who indicated no preference seem to have the most varied skills. The majority of the students who preferred the non-native teacher or both

teachers rated their skills as good, though overall the students who preferred a non-native had poorer skills. The correlation test gave a C-value of 0.273. Values below 0.2 are considered as insignificant; whereas values above 0.3 are considered as significant (Karjalainen 2010, 122). This means that though there seems to be a correlation, it is not big enough to be significant.

To explore this further, means were also calculated for each teacher preference groups by giving the proficiency levels values from 1 to 4. The NT-group (native teacher) had the highest mean of 3.36 and the NNT-group (non-native teacher) the lowest, 2.75. The two other groups had means close to each other: the B-group (both teachers) 3.03 and the NP-group (no preference) 3.00. The average for the all of the subjects was 3.03; the results thus suggest that there might be a correlation between linguistic skills and preference for a native or a non-native teacher. Another correlation test was therefore made with only the two groups (NT and NNT), and it provided a C-value of 0.367, confirming that there exists a correlation: students preferring native teachers rate their skills higher than those preferring a non-native teacher.

#### ***5.4.2 Students' view on learning targets and teacher preference***

In order to next examine the correlation between learning target and teacher preference, a cross-tabulation was made with question 42 (teacher preference) and question 16 (learning target should be a native-like proficiency). The results shown in Table 16 (see page 62) seem to suggest that the NT-group agreed the most with the statement that the target should be a native-like proficiency (67.9%). The NNT-group, on the other hand, was the one to disagree the most with the statement (71.5%). Similarly, also the majority of the NP-group disagreed (63.8%). The B-group was divided into two: 51.2% disagreed with the statement and 46.2% agreed.

Teacher preference	The target in EFL should be native-like proficiency					Total
	No opinion	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	
Native teacher (NT)	0,0%	10,7%	21,4%	42,9%	25,0%	100,0%
Non-native teacher (NNT)	0,0%	28,6%	42,9%	28,6%	0,0%	100,0%
Both (B)	2,5%	16,2%	35,0%	35,0%	11,2%	100,0%
No preference (NP)	8,5%	14,9%	48,9%	21,3%	6,4%	100,0%
Total	3,3%	16,9%	37,7%	31,7%	10,4%	100,0%

**Table 16.** Cross-tabulation: teacher preference and learning target.

The correlation test gave a C-value of 0.349, suggesting that there is a significant correlation between the two factors. The C-value was even higher (0.421) when examining only the NT- and NNT-groups. Hence, the students who preferred the non-native teacher were most likely to disagree with a native-like proficiency target; it was also likely for those who showed no preference. The students who preferred both teacher were more indecisive; whereas the students preferring a native teacher were the most likely to agree with a native-like proficiency target.

#### **5.4.3 Students' current teacher and teacher preference**

The third background factor to be cross-tabulated with teacher preference was the nativeness of the students' current teacher (question 23). The cross-tabulation is again shown in the table (Table 17).

Teacher preference	Is your current teacher a native English speaker?			Total
	No	Yes	Both	
Native teacher (NT)	85,7%	3,6%	10,7%	100,0%
Non-native teacher (NNT)	100,0%	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%
Both (B)	90,0%	2,5%	7,5%	100,0%
No preference (NP)	93,6%	2,1%	4,3%	100,0%
Total	91,8%	2,2%	6,0%	100,0%

**Table 17.** Cross-tabulation: teacher preference and current teacher.

The results reveal that all of the students in the NNT-group had a non-native teacher as their current English teacher; whereas the rest of the groups had some students with either a native teacher or both teachers. The NT-group was the group who had most native teachers currently teaching them.

The differences between the groups were however low, and the correlation test gave a C-value of 0.155, suggesting that there is not a correlation between current teacher and preference. As with the other results, the correlation test was also done with only the NT- and NNT-groups. This time the C-value was higher but still not significant: 0.267. However, the number of students who have a native teacher or both is so low that no definite conclusions can be drawn from these results.

#### ***5.4.4 Experience with a native English speaker teacher and teacher preference***

The number of student who had at some point had a native English speaker teacher was much higher than the number of students currently having a native teacher, and thus, this background factor was next to be analyzed. Table 18 shows the results for the cross-tabulation between teacher preference and question 23 (experience with a native teacher). The results show that the students in the NT-group had had the most experience with native teachers; whereas the NNT-group had had the least. The two remaining groups had also had some experience with native teachers, though not to the extent as the native teacher group. The correlation test gave the C-value of 0.261, meaning no strong significant correlation. Further examination of the native and non-native teacher groups however revealed a significant correlation (C-value of 0.405).

Teacher preference	Have you had native speaker teachers?		Total
	No	Yes	
Native teacher (NT)	53,6%	46,4%	100,0%
Non-native teacher (NNT)	92,9%	7,1%	100,0%
Both (B)	65,0%	35,0%	100,0%
No preference (NP)	78,7%	21,3%	100,0%
Total	71,0%	29,0%	100,0%

**Table 18.** Cross-tabulation: teacher preference and experience with native teachers.

#### 5.4.5 Previous experiences and teacher preference

In order to analyze the correlation between the nature of previous experiences with the teachers and teacher preference, the results under the alternative *no experience* were omitted so as to examine only the nature of the experience, not the existence of one. The cross-tabulation between question 24 (previous experiences with native teachers have been positive) and teacher preference is shown in Table 19, and cross-tabulation for question 25 (previous experiences with non-native teachers have been positive) is shown in Table 20 (see page 65).

Teacher preference	Previous experiences with non-native teachers have been positive				Total
	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	
Native teacher (NT)	7,4%	3,7%	44,4%	44,4%	100,0%
Non-native teacher (NNT)	0,0%	0,0%	38,5%	61,5%	100,0%
Both (B)	1,4%	4,1%	41,9%	52,7%	100,0%
No preference (NP)	2,2%	8,7%	39,1%	50,0%	100,0%
Total	2,3%	4,6%	41,0%	52,0%	100,0%

**Table 19.** Cross-tabulation: teacher preference and previous experiences with native teachers.

The majority of the students in all four groups agree that the previous experiences with native teachers have been positive: 96.9% of B-group agreed, 93.8% of NT-group agreed, 82.3% of the NP-group agreed, and finally 60% of the NNT-group agreed. The results of the non-native group however show that they did not feel as positive about their experiences with native teachers, and in the correlation test, the C-value was 0.462, suggesting a significant correlation between the nature of the students' previous experiences and their teacher preference. However, the results were much more evenly distributed when examining the students' opinions about their previous experiences with non-native teachers, and a C-value of only 0.208 suggests that the nature of previous experiences with non-native teachers has little impact on teacher preference. When only the native teacher and non-native teacher groups' answers are taken into account, the C-values rises a little to 0.257, but it still remains too low for indicating significant correlation.

Teacher preference	Previous experiences with native teachers have been positive				Total
	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	
Native teacher (NT)	6,2%	0,0%	18,8%	75,0%	100,0%
Non-native teacher (NNT)	20,0%	20,0%	40,0%	20,0%	100,0%
Both (B)	0,0%	3,1%	12,5%	84,4%	100,0%
No preference (NP)	0,0%	17,6%	29,4%	52,9%	100,0%
Total	2,9%	7,1%	20,0%	70,0%	100,0%

**Table 20.** Cross-tabulation: teacher preference and previous experience with non-native teachers.

To sum up the results related to the correlations, a significant correlation was found between the nature of previous experiences with native teachers and teacher preference as well as between a native-like proficiency as a learning target and teacher preference. In order to further examine the link between the factors and teacher preference, correlations were also calculated with only the groups of students who chose a native teacher or a non-native teacher. These results seem to suggest that a significant correlation exists between most of the factors and teacher preference, the exceptions being the nativeness of the students' current teacher and the nature of previous experiences with non-native teachers. However, these results are even more tentative than the other correlations since the native teacher and non-native teacher groups have only 56 students in total. The correlations and cross-tabulations nevertheless provided interesting results, which partially support previous research and partially do not. I shall in the next chapter discuss all of the results in more depth by comparing the results of the present study to those of previous studies.

## **6 Discussion**

In the previous chapter, I presented all the data and results of the present study, and in this chapter, I will focus on the main results and provide a further discussion about the study's implications and limitations. I shall begin by answering my research questions: in Section 6.1, I shall examine the students' views on issues related to global English, in Section 6.2, I shall turn my attention to students' perceptions of native and non-native teachers and discuss the characteristics of English teachers, in Section 6.3, I shall look at students' teacher preferences and the reasons they provided for their preference, and in Section 6.4, I shall examine the possible factors affecting their choice. No hypotheses were set forth in the beginning of this study although based on previous research certain assumptions were made concerning the possible results. I shall therefore also compare the results of the present study against previous findings and comment on the expectedness or unexpectedness of the results. Finally in Section 6.5, I will focus on the central implications and limitations of the study as well as provide suggestions for future research.

### **6.1 Students' views on issues related to global English**

The focus of the study was not merely on the teachers of English, instead on a more general level, the study also examined students' views on global English. Hence, the first research question was:

1. How do Finnish upper secondary school students perceive the learning targets of EFL, the current role of English in the world, and the different varieties of English?

According to Crystal (2003, 29-30), the current role of English is that of a global language which is being used as an international lingua franca. The results of the present study revealed that the students are aware of the important global role of English and its lingua franca status. Firstly, when considering their future, the students found it important that they knew English. Secondly, they acknowledged the shift, described by Crystal (2003, 69), from a native speaker majority to a non-native speaker majority: according to the students, there are more non-native speakers of English than there are native speakers and they will use English more with non-native speakers in

the future. Finally, the students were aware of the core linguistic nature of a lingua franca language: conveying the content of the message is in their opinion more important than grammatical accuracy.

However, the students still placed more value on the native speaker. The students felt it was easier to communicate with native speakers. Furthermore, the students wanted to learn to speak English in a way that would make them sound like native speakers, and approximately half of the students thought a non-native speaker does not know how English should be pronounced or written. Accordingly, nearly half of the students thought that the target of foreign language teaching should be a native-like competence. The students thus seem to hold on to the native speaker fallacy described by Phillipson (1992). One reason for this might be the norms and models used in foreign language education in Finland. As Kirkpatrick (2007, 184) notes, most Expanding Circle countries have adopted an exonormative model based on Inner Circle norms due to its prestige and legitimacy and for the lack of a local model. The central role of the native speaker is evident also in the Common European Framework of References for Languages (Council of Europe 2001), on which the Finnish curricula are based.

The global role of English has also affected the different varieties of English. For example, as Kachru (1992a, 359) notes, the Outer Circle Englishes are emerging as legitimate varieties of their own. In addition, Jenkins (2009, 16) argues that in many Expanding Circles, English is moving toward a second language status rather than remaining a norm-dependent foreign language. These developments suggest that the center of English is moving from the Inner Circle varieties toward local varieties. However, the results in Section 5.2.2 showed that the students found the central norm-providing Inner Circle varieties as most appealing (American English and British English); whereas the Outer Circle variety (Indian English) and the local Expanding Circle variety (Finnish English) were the least appealing. In addition, though the students expressed positive feelings towards a fluent Finnish accent, they still appreciated a native-like accent the most. This can be seen as further evidence for the conclusion that the students' views on English are still very much Inner Circle centered.



Similar findings were reported in the National Survey by Leppänen et al. (2011, 89-90), and according to them (2011, 89), the results indicate that Finns still view English as a foreign language that should be spoken without a local accent, in other words, they do not feel that it is yet their linguistic property. Nonetheless, Leppänen et al. (2011, 167) argue that young people in Finland have already taken ownership of their English and adopted it as a part of their linguistic repertoire. Therefore, it is surprising that the students' views on different Englishes, and especially Finnish English, do not differ from the views of the Finns in general. However, the development of an accepted local variety of English is a long process, and as Leppänen et al. (2011, 128) note, English is still a long way from becoming the "third domestic language" in Finland. Furthermore, the students might feel that the accent most often associated with Finnish English does not represent their way of speaking, and thus, it is not the variety used by them to convey their identities and social belonging.

All in all, the students' views on English do not seem to follow a single line of thought, their opinions are neither native speaker dependent nor non-native speaker oriented. Hence, the results can be interpreted as reflecting a struggle between the non-native reality and the native ideal: though the students might be aware of the global role of English and the changes it brings forth in terms of the situations where English is used and the language itself, they are not yet ready to let go of the native speaker ideal altogether. In order to achieve this, a change in the language learning models and norms is needed, and perhaps a model based on the lingua franca status of the language, as suggested by Kirkpatrick (2007, 193), would serve as a better pedagogical approach. If the future foreign language education emphasizes the global reality of English and provides the students with the means to critically reflect their own perceptions of the language, the paradigm shift towards a more lingua franca oriented language awareness might be achieved.

## 6.2 Students' perceptions of native and non-native English teachers

The main focus of the study was on the teachers of English, and the students' views of the teachers were examined from three different perspective. The first perceptive was the students' perceptions of the teachers' strengths and weaknesses, as stated in the second research question:

2. How do Finnish upper secondary school students perceive the native and non-native teachers of English? What are their strengths and weaknesses?

The students' ideal English teacher would have good teaching skills, good linguistic skills; the teacher would be motivating and inspiring, clear and encouraging, learner-oriented and supportive, patient and friendly, versatile and talkative, stern and demanding, able to create a casual learning atmosphere, and knowledgeable in Finnish. However, the most important qualities in an English teacher are teaching skills and linguistic skills. The students also find it important that English is used most of the time during the lessons but that they can get help also in Finnish.

Previous studies have mostly assigned these qualities to either native teachers or to non-native teachers. For example, Benke and Medyes (2005) and Ütsünlüoglu (2007) mention good linguistic skills, a social personality, sensitivity, and the abilities to motivate the students and create a good atmosphere as the native teachers' strengths. Likewise, Ütsünlüoglu (2007) and He and Miller (2011) report teaching skills, clarity, awareness of learner difficulties, knowledge of local language, and being strict as the non-native teachers' strengths. However, the Finnish students did not clearly state that any of these qualities would only be found in one of the teachers; instead, most were found in both teachers. Likewise, a native teacher can know what it is like to learn a foreign language, just as a non-native teacher's linguistic skills can be equally good as a native teacher's. According to the students, a non-native English teacher can achieve a high linguistic proficiency even if on a more general level, only half of the students think that a non-native speaker can know English properly. Accordingly, the non-native teacher is seen as a better language learner model, similarly to Benke and Medgyes' study (2005) but unlike in the study by Kasai et al. (2011).

As for the teaching of different linguistic skills, previous research (see Benke and Medgyes 2005; Lasagabaster and Sierra 2005; Kasai et al. 2011) has shown that students prefer a native teacher in teaching oral skills, vocabulary, and culture, and although Kasai et al. (2011) reported that the Japanese students preferred a native teacher also in grammar, generally a non-native teacher is preferred in teaching grammar. The findings of the present study confirmed the assumption that Finnish students will prefer a native teacher in teaching oral skills and culture, and a non-native teacher in teaching grammar. However, contrary to previous studies, the Finnish students also showed a slight preference for a non-native teacher in teaching vocabulary. The differences in findings may be caused by the students looking at vocabulary teaching from different perspectives. Those preferring a native teacher probably value them for their idiomatic knowledge of English and vaster vocabulary; whereas the students preferring a non-native teacher most likely value them for their translation skills and ability to provide the students with equivalents in the local language.

The Finnish students seem to appreciate native and non-native teachers and find strengths in both of them. Furthermore, although linguistic skills are still closely linked, as expected, with the native teachers and knowledge of Finnish and grammar with the non-native teachers, the students seem to be critical about making too many stereotypical characterizations about the teachers. Thus, the native teacher can be an experienced language learner and the non-native teacher a proficient English speaker. In addition, most of the qualities listed by the students as most important in an English teacher were not assigned to either teacher even though previous studies have listed them as either teacher's strengths. Kasai et al. (2011, 286) hypothesize that the results of their study regarding students' perceptions which seem to be inconsistent with previous studies may in fact reflect the different teaching cultures or idiosyncratic features of the teachers. Perhaps there then does not exist such a clear division between native and non-native teachers as Medgyes (2009) insists. The views of the Finnish students suggest that the nativeness of the teacher does not automatically determine their qualities; instead, both teachers can share the same qualities.

### 6.3 Students' teacher preference

The study examined the students' perceptions also from the perspective of preference, and hence, the third research question was:

3. Do Finnish upper secondary school students show a preference towards native or non-native teachers of English? Why? Why not?

The previous results have already indicated that perhaps the nativeness of the teacher is not the most central issue for the students when regarding foreign language teaching and teachers. This assumption is further strengthened by the students' teacher preferences. Nearly half of the students wanted to be taught by both native and non-native teachers, and approximately a quarter of the students showed no preference. The native and non-native teachers gained the same amount of support, but nevertheless, the number of students showing a preference for either one was less than a third of the subjects. Furthermore, the students felt that they were just as able to learn English from a native as they were from a non-native teacher, suggesting that for most of the students, nativeness of the teacher does not in fact affect their learning abilities.

The reasons the students provided for their choices reflected the teachers' qualities mentioned in previous studies. The main reasons for choosing a native teacher had to do with the teacher's linguistic skills, cultural knowledge, and teaching of oral skills and culture. These qualities have been reported to be associated with the native teacher by students in previous studies (see for example Lasagabaster and Sierra 2005). The main reasons for choosing a non-native teacher were the teacher's knowledge of Finnish, empathy towards learner difficulties, ability to be a language learner model, and teaching grammar. For example Benke and Medgyes (2005) and He and Miller (2011), also listed these as non-native teachers' qualities. The students who chose both teachers wanted to benefit from both teachers' strengths and gain versatile teaching from both perspectives.

In previous studies by Lasagabaster and Sierra (2005), Benke and Medgyes (2005), and He and Miller (2011), students have shown a preference towards both teachers. Thus, the results of the

present study confirmed the assumption that also the Finnish students will prefer both teachers and furthermore, that the reasons for choosing a native or non-native teacher will relate to either the teacher's linguistic skills or teaching skills. However, none of the studies conducted earlier have given the students the option of showing no preference. This alternative does nonetheless provide information about whether the students do in fact consider nativeness a viable concept and a factor that determines the teachers' qualities. The reasons provided by the students in order to justify their choice of no preference highlight that the nativeness of the teacher does not matter; rather other factors determine their teacher preference, such as teaching skills and linguistic skills. The results of the present study seem to indicate that nativeness is not a determining factor for all students when considering teacher preference, neither does it necessarily determine the characteristics of the teacher, either native or non-native.

#### **6.4 Factors correlating with teacher preference**

Thirdly and finally, the study also examined whether some background factors affected students' perceptions of the teachers and particularly, their teacher preference. The fourth research question was thus:

4. Are some background factors related to the Finnish upper secondary school students' choice of preference (i.e. students' linguistic skills, their views on learning targets, or the students' experiences with the teachers)?

In previous studies, it has been suggested that educational or proficiency levels might affect the students' teacher preference (see Lasagabaster and Sierra 2005; He and Miller 2011). Moreover, in this study those students who preferred to be taught by a native teacher thought that a native teacher would be more capable of helping those students who already have strong language skills. This was also reported as a native teacher's strength by Rao (2010). These findings seem to suggest that there might be a correlation between the students' linguistic skills and their choice of teacher.

All in all, the Finnish students rated their English skills as good, though there was a group of students who rated their skills to be higher than average and a group who was embarrassed by their skills. As expected, the results of the present study show that the students who preferred a native teacher did in fact rate their English skills higher than those students who preferred a non-native teacher. This correlation was also discovered to be statistically significant. Most likely those students with strong linguistic skills feel that only a native teacher can make their skills even better; whereas students with not so strong skills perhaps feel that they can get more help (also in Finnish) from the non-native teacher. However, this deserves further research since, in general, the students taking part in this study had good English skills. In addition, the small number of subjects means that the results of the correlations tests are only tentative at best. Perhaps a study with a larger number of students with more divergent proficiency levels would conclusively show whether linguistic skills also correlate with preference for both teachers and no preference.

Both Lasagabaster and Sierra (2002) and Watson Todd and Pojanapunya (2009) have examined the effects of previous teacher experiences on students' teacher preference, and while the former discovered that previous experiences had an effect, the latter discovered that there was little effect. In the present study, not only was the existence of previous teacher experiences examined, but also, the nativeness of the students' current teacher and the nature of their previous teacher experiences were taken into consideration. Most of the Finnish students had only a non-native English teacher currently teaching them, and in fact, most of the students had never had a native English teacher. However, the ones who had had experiences with native teacher rated them as positive. The correlation between nativeness of the students' current teacher and their teacher preference revealed no significant correlation, even though the students who preferred a native teacher had more often than the others a native teacher as their current teacher. Similarly, the correlation was not found to be statistically significant between existence of previous experiences and teacher preference when considering all subjects.

A more unexpected correlation was found between the students' previous native teacher experience and their native or non-native teacher preference: those who preferred a native teacher had had more often a native English teacher. This finding supports Lasagabaster and Sierra' study (2002) but is contradictory to the study of Watson Todd and Pojanapunya (2009). However, the findings further show that the nature of the previous experience also affected teacher preference: the students who preferred both or the native teacher clearly thought that their experiences had been positive; whereas those with no preference were slightly less inclined to do so and those preferring non-native teachers were clearly the least ready to agree. Thus, the findings imply that it does not matter whether one has had any experiences with both teachers to choose both teachers or to show no preference, but if one has had experiences, the positiveness of those experiences will affect the choice.

The studies of Margić and Širola (2010) and Jin (2005) have shown that exposure to concepts and conflicts related to EIL, World Englishes, and global English can influence students' perceptions of the teacher and their teacher preference. In the present study, the link between students' awareness of issues related to global English and their perception of teachers was indeed, as expected, confirmed by the correlation calculations: students' teacher preference is significantly related to their views on the learning targets of EFL. Those students who preferred a native teacher were most likely to agree that the learning target should be a native-like proficiency. On the other hand, the students who preferred a non-native teacher, or showed no preference, clearly disagreed with the statement. The students who preferred both did not clearly agree or disagree. These finding thus support the claim made by Jin (2005, 45) that the acceptance of native norms is linked to native teacher preference. Moreover, these findings indicate that some students are still dependable on the native norms while others are not. It might be that some students simply feel that a native-like proficiency is unachievable for them, but the general level of awareness of other issues related to global English suggest that some of the students might have realized that attempting to achieve a native-like proficiency is unnecessary and irrelevant for their future English use.

## 6.5 Implications and limitations of the study

The findings of the present study seem to suggest that in the students' opinion the nativeness of their English teacher is not a determining factor both in terms of preference and qualities: both can have the same qualities and be as good teachers. These findings could be interpreted as only showing political correctness, but since the number of students commenting that the nativeness of the teacher does not matter is so high, there must be something more. It is difficult to draw definite conclusions since no other study has offered the students the alternative of no preference. However, a further interpretation of the findings might be that the Finnish students' awareness of different speakers of English and the communicative reality of English has affected their view on the importance of such concepts as *native* and *non-native*. It would thus be interesting to examine further what the students understand by such concepts and to whom they are applicable.

It was argued that for the number of students preferring both teachers or showing no preference, nativeness of the teacher is not a determining factor. However, there were two groups of students who still found the nativeness of their teacher as important. Those who preferred a native teacher had better linguistic skills, they wished to gain a native-like proficiency, they had had native teachers before, and they had enjoyed those experiences. They wanted a native teacher for motivational factors as well as for the teacher's linguistic skills. On the other hand, the students who preferred a non-native teacher had poorer English skills, they did not want a native-like proficiency, they had not had as much experience with native teachers, and if they had, the experiences were not as positive. The students wanted a non-native teacher for the teacher's Finnish and teaching skills. These students were thus more traditional in their views about the teachers and saw that only one type of teacher could help them in their foreign language learning.

Before turning to the final implications and conclusions, it is necessary to be aware of the limitations of this study. The major limitation of the study is the sample size, which is rather small for making generalizations about the views of all Finnish students. This is especially true with the correlations, and a study with more students might provide more valid results either proving that the



significances found in this study represent larger tendencies or revealing that the correlations only represent individual patterns.

The rather small sample size also meant that the number of students who had had experiences with native teachers was low when compared to the number of students who had not had any experiences. One might argue that the number of students with no experiences makes the findings of this study irrelevant. However, the ratio of students with native teacher experiences to those without any is likely a reflection of the current distribution of native English teachers in Finland. There are no statistics about their numbers, but the estimates by Canagarajah (1999, 91) on the number of non-native teachers worldwide (80%) is close to the number of Finnish students who have only had non-native teachers (71%). Therefore, choosing only those students with native teacher experiences would have been data selection and as a result, the findings would not have been able to represent the general situation in Finland. All in all, the purpose of this study was to gain insight into the students' views, perceptions, and notions, but it should be stated that not all of these notions are based on real-life experience. An interesting basis for a future study would then be to examine the correlations between notions and reality, and examine whether the students' perceptions change after they have had experiences with both groups of teachers.

Another limitation of the study was the online questionnaire. As discussed in Chapter 4, the small sample size was partially due to the use of an online questionnaire, which made it easier for the students to disregard the survey. Another drawback was that the students could not ask for help nor could they be given clarifications while they were answering the questionnaire, which resulted in some problematic responses. The unclear wording in questions 24 and 25 about the nature of previous teacher experiences could have been noticed and corrected if the data had been gathered in person. Further studies could also benefit from interviews as they would allow the subjects to elaborate more and possibly provide new insight into the matters.

However, since the purpose of the study was to examine the Finnish students' views on issues not yet studied in the Finnish context, the survey method was the best choice as it made it possible

to cover several issues. In addition, though the sample size was smaller than hoped for, the findings in this study, along with previous research, indicate certain tendencies, which can be used as a basis for planning the future of EFL teaching in Finland. Furthermore, the findings provide several starting points for future studies, which can further investigate the situation on a large scale or narrow the focus to a single aspect.

The findings of the present study can have beneficial implications for foreign language teaching, foreign language teachers, and the students themselves. First of all, the findings clearly show that the students find strengths in both native and non-native teachers and want to benefit from each teacher's strengths. Foreign language teaching could thus employ both teachers. However, instead of the teachers teaching different courses or keeping separate lessons, Tajino and Tajino (2000) have shown that the native and non-native teachers can be used more effectively as part of team-learning, where the entire class, teachers included, interact and change ideas with each other, thus, promoting authentic communication and ultimately improving the students' communicative competence.

Native and non-native teachers can also find comfort in knowing that the students do not generally prefer one over the other. Furthermore, the findings show that the students think that both teachers can share the same important qualities. This should improve both native and non-native teachers' self-images. The teachers do not need to conform to the stereotypical characteristics and job descriptions; instead, they have equal chances of becoming good English teachers with their personal strengths. These issues could be discussed already in teacher training. For example, Seidlhofer (1999) argues that teacher training which aids the teachers to critically evaluate their profession and their own contributions will empower the teachers. Finally, the findings of the present study can be seen as supportive of an EFL pedagogy which takes into consideration the global role of English, the controversies and the conflicts, and promotes awareness and critical thinking. With a pedagogy that focuses on multicultural values and intercultural competence, the debate over native and non-native might indeed become obsolete and irrelevant in the future.

## 7 Conclusion

The purpose of the present study was to examine the Finnish students' perceptions of native and non-native matters in EFL teaching, with a focus on native and non-native teachers of English. In order to achieve this, data was collected from 183 senior-year students in five general upper secondary schools in Tampere via an online questionnaire. The findings of the empirical study revealed that the students realize the important role of English and are aware of the lingua franca status and nature of the language. However, although half of the students do not believe in a native-like proficiency learning target, the students are not ready to let go of the native speaker ideal and they still value a native accent and language fluency. Nevertheless, the students show no preference towards the native English teacher; instead, the students find value in both native and non-native teachers. Although certain students feel that only one of the teachers can help their English learning, most of the students would want to benefit from the strengths of both teachers and feel that the nativeness of the teacher does not affect their learning abilities. Furthermore, the findings suggest that for some students, nativeness is in fact irrelevant both regarding their teacher preference and the teachers' qualities. Certain factors were found to be linked to the students' teacher preferences: while only the students' views on learning targets of EFL and the nature of their native teacher experiences had a significant correlation with overall teacher preference, the choice between a native teacher and a non-native teacher was further linked to the students' English proficiency and the existence of previous experiences with native teachers.

Native and non-native English teachers can find comfort in the fact that the students do not prefer one over the other and that though some qualities are more often than others assigned to either one, in general the students feel that both teachers can achieve the teaching skills and linguistic skills necessary for becoming good English teachers. However, the teachers should be aware of the students' needs. While using English most of the time during the lessons is important for motivating the students, it is equally important for the students to get help also in Finnish. The teaching should also be learner-oriented: students with different skill levels have different needs,

and all of them need an encouraging, patient, and supportive teacher who is sensitive about these differences.

For the future development of EFL teaching, more studies related to native and non-native matters in EFL are needed. Future studies could investigate the background factors related to students' perceptions of teachers on a larger scale in order to confirm the significances found in this study. Small scale studies incorporating student and teacher interviews could also provide new insights and more thoroughly examine the importance of the teachers' nativeness. Related to this, a study concerning the students' views on the concepts of native and non-native would be interesting in terms of who they perceive as a native speaker and what qualifies a person to be a native speaker. After all, the status of English and its speakers is shifting, and it might be that in the future a *lingua franca* English, or even a local Finnish English, will become the educational norm and the division between native and non-native speakers becomes even more difficult to define.

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## Appendix 1: Questionnaire in Finnish

4/30/2014

E-lomake - Pro Gradu -kysely abiturienteille

Hei! Olen englannin kielen opiskelija Tampereen yliopistosta ja suoritan maisterin tutkintoani. Tämä kysely on osa Pro Gradu -tutkielmaani, jossa kartoitan lukio-oppilaiden suhtautumista englannin kieltä ja sen opetusta kohtaan. Kysymyksiin ei siis ole oikeita tai vääriä vastauksia, vaan toivon, että vastaisitte niihin mahdollisimman tarkasti omien mielipiteidenne mukaan.

### Pro Gradu -kysely abiturienteille

Kyselyssä esiintyvät termit natiivi ja ei-natiivi tarkoittavat:

natiivi: henkilö, joka puhuu äidinkielenään englantia

ei-natiivi: henkilö, jonka äidinkieli on jokin muu kuin englanti ja joka on oppinut englannin toisena tai vieraana kielenä

#### Taustatietoja

Mikä on äidinkieleni?					
<input type="checkbox"/> Suomi <input type="checkbox"/> Ruotsi <input type="checkbox"/> Muu					
Jos muu, niin mikä/mitkä? <input type="text"/>					
Kuinka kauan olet opiskellut englantia? <input type="radio"/> 3. luokalta (A1-kieli) <input type="radio"/> 4. tai 5. luokalta (A2-kieli) <input type="radio"/> Aloitin aiemmin tai myöhemmin					
Jos aloitit aiemmin tai myöhemmin, niin milloin? <input type="text"/>					
Oletko viettänyt pidemmän aikaa (yli 3kk) englanninkielisessä maassa? <input type="radio"/> Kyllä <input type="radio"/> En					
Jos olet, niin missä ja kuinka kauan? <input type="text"/>					
Kuinka kiinnostunut olet oppimaan englannin kieltä? (1 en ole kiinnostunut - 5 erittäin kiinnostunut) <input type="radio"/> 1 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 3 <input type="radio"/> 4 <input type="radio"/> 5					

#### Kielitaito

Kuinka hyvin arvioisit osaavasi englantia kokonaisuudessaan? <input type="radio"/> Erinomaisesti <input type="radio"/> Hyvin <input type="radio"/> Kohtalaisesti <input type="radio"/> Huonosti					
Kuinka arvioisit englannin kielen taitosi seuraavien vaihtoehtojen valossa?					
vain yksittäisiä sanoja vaivalloisesti kohtalaisesti suhteellisen sujuvasti vaivattomasti					
Puhun englantia	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Kirjoitan englantia	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Luen englantia	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ymmärrän englantia	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Millaiseksi koet englannin kielen osaamisesi?					
		Kyllä	En	En osaa sanoa	
Koen osaavani englantia yhtä hyvin kuin sitä äidinkielenään puhuva	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		
Koen osaavani englantia paremmin kuin abiturientti keskimäärin	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		
Koen osaavani englantia riittävän hyvin	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		
Häpeän englannin kielen taitoani	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		
Väittämät					
	Täysin eri mieltä	Jokseenkin eri mieltä	Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	Täysin samaa mieltä	En osaa sanoa
Tulen elämäni aikana puhumaan englantia enemmän ei-natiivien kanssa kuin englannin natiivipuhujien kanssa	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Haluaisin oppia puhumaan englantia niin, että kuulostan natiivipuhujalta	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

En mielelläni sano englanniksi ääneen ajatuksiani, jollen ole varma, että ilmaisuni on kielipöydästä oikein	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Kun kommunikoin englanniksi, tärkeämpää on viestin välittäminen eteenpäin kuin virheetön kieli	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
On tulevaisuuteni kannalta tärkeää, että osaan englantia, esimerkiksi opiskelussa, töissä, vapaa-ajalla	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Englannin käyttö on helpompaa natiivipuhujien kuin ei-natiivipuhujien kanssa	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Maailmassa on enemmän englannin natiivipuhujia kuin ei-natiivipuhujia	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ei-natiivipuhujat tietävät, kuinka englantia pitäisi lausua ja kirjoittaa	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Kielenopetuksen tavoitteena tulisi Suomessa olla natiivipuhujan tasoinen kielitaito	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Erilaiset englannit

Mikä seuraavista englannin kielen muodoista on sinusta miellyttävin? Valitse yksi annetuista vaihtoehdoista.

☐ Brittienglanti  
☐ Amerikanenglanti  
☐ Suomalaisen englanti  
☐ Irlannin englanti  
☐ Australian englanti  
☐ Kanadan englanti  
☐ Intian englanti  
☐ En osaa sanoa tai en tunnista eri muotoja

Mikä seuraavista englannin kielen muodoista on sinusta epämiellyttävin? Valitse yksi annetuista vaihtoehdoista.

☐ Brittienglanti  
☐ Amerikanenglanti  
☐ Suomalaisen englanti  
☐ Irlannin englanti  
☐ Australian englanti  
☐ Kanadan englanti  
☐ Intian englanti  
☐ En osaa sanoa tai en tunnista eri muotoja

Miltä sinusta tuntuu, kun kuulet tunnetun suomalaisen puhuvan englantia televisiossa takerellen? Valitse yksi annetuista vaihtoehdoista.

☐ Ihailua hyvästä yrityksestä  
☐ Ylpeyttä oman kielitaitosi paremmuudesta  
☐ Huvittuneisuutta  
☐ Myötätuntoa  
☐ Ärtymystä  
☐ Häpeää suomalaisten puolesta  
☐ Ei tunnu mitään

Miltä sinusta tuntuu, kun kuulet tunnetun suomalaisen puhuvan englantia televisiossa sujuvasti suomalaisella aksentilla? Valitse yksi annetuista vaihtoehdoista.

☐ Ylpeyttä suomalaisten puolesta  
☐ Ylpeyttä oman kielitaitosi paremmuudesta  
☐ Ihailua puhujaa kohtaan  
☐ Huvittuneisuutta  
☐ Myötätuntoa  
☐ Ärtymystä  
☐ Alemmuutta oman kielitaitosi huonommuudesta  
☐ Häpeää suomalaisten puolesta  
☐ Ei tunnu mitään

Miltä sinusta tuntuu, kun kuulet tunnetun suomalaisen puhuvan englantia televisiossa sujuvasti syntyperäisen puhujan tavoin? Valitse yksi annetuista vaihtoehdoista.

☐ Ylpeyttä suomalaisten puolesta  
☐ Ihailua puhujaa kohtaan  
☐ Huvittuneisuutta  
☐ Ärtymystä  
☐ Alemmuutta oman kielitaitosi huonommuudesta  
☐ Häpeää suomalaisten puolesta  
☐ Ei tunnu mitään



**Natiivi- ja ei-natiiviopettajat**

Onko sinun tämän hetkinen englannin opettajasi englannin natiivipuhuja?

☐ Kyllä☐ Ei☐ Minulla on sekä natiivi- että ei-natiiviopettaja

Onko sinulla ollut opettajia, jotka puhuvat englantia äidinkielenään?

☐ Kyllä☐ Ei

	Täysin eri mieltä	Jokseenkin eri mieltä	Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	Täysin samaa mieltä	Minulla ei ole ollut kokemuksia
Kokemukseni natiiviopettajien kanssa ovat olleet positiivisia	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Kokemukseni ei-natiiviopettajien kanssa ovat olleet positiivisia	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Vaikuttiko aiempien kokemuksiesi luonne siihen kuinka opit englantia?

☐ Kyllä☐ Ei**Väittämät**

	Täysin eri mieltä	Jokseenkin eri mieltä	Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	Täysin samaa mieltä	En osaa sanoa
Jos saisin valita, haluaisin englannin opettajakseni englannin natiivipuhujan	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Jos saisin valita, haluaisin englannin opettajakseni ei-natiivipuhujan	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Jos saisin valita, haluaisin että englannin kursseilla olisi sekä natiiviopettaja että ei-natiiviopettaja	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ei-natiiviopettaja on parempi opettamaan kielioppia	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Natiiviopettaja on parempi opettamaan suullista kielitaitoa	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ei-natiiviopettaja on parempi opettamaan sanastoa	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Natiiviopettaja on parempi opettamaan kulttuuriin liittyviä asioita	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Uskon, että pystyn oppimaan englantia yhtä hyvin natiiviopettajalta kuin ei-natiiviopettajalta	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Minulle on tärkeää, että saan apua opettajalta myös suomeksi	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Englannin opettajan tärkein ominaisuus on hyvä kielitaito	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ei-natiiviopettaja ei voi osata englantia yhtä hyvin kuin natiivipuhuja	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Kielten tunneilla on tärkeintä, että englannin kieltä käytetään suurimman osan ajasta	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ei-natiiviopettaja on parempi kielenoppijan roolimalli	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Opettajan kielitaito on tärkeämpää kuin taito opettaa	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Natiiviopettaja ei tiedä millaista on oppia vierasta kieltä	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Kenet ottaisit mieluiten englannin kurssin opettajaksesi?

☐ Natiiviopettajan

☐ Ei-natiiviopettajan

☐ Molemmat

☐ Ei väliä

Miksi?

Mikä on englannin opettajan tärkein ominaisuus juuri sinun oppimisesi kannalta?

	Natiiviopettajan ominaisuus	Ei-natiiviopettajan ominaisuus	Ominaisuus löytyy molemmista opettajista
Onko tämä ominaisuus mielestäsi natiiviopettajan vai ei-natiiviopettajan ominaisuus?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Muita kommentteja**

Jos haluat perustella joitain yllä antamiasi vastauksiasi tai sinulla on muuta kommentoitavaa, voit kirjoittaa kommenttisi tähän.

## Appendix 2: Questionnaire in English

### Background information

What is your mother tongue?

- ☐ Finnish
- ☐ Swedish
- ☐ Other

If other, which? \_\_\_\_\_

How long have you studied English?

- ☐ From the third grade
- ☐ From the fourth grade
- ☐ I started earlier/later

If you started earlier or later, when? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you stayed at an English-speaking country for a longer period of time (more than 3 months)?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If you have, where? \_\_\_\_\_

How interested are you in learning English? (1 not interested – 5 very interested)

- |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1                        | 2                        | 3                        | 4                        | 5                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

### Linguistic skills

How good would you estimate your English skills to be overall?

- ☐ Excellent
- ☐ Good
- ☐ Moderate
- ☐ Poor

How do you evaluate your skills in English according to the options below?

	Only a few words	With difficulty	Moderately	Fairly fluently	Fluently
I speak English	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I write English	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I read English	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand English	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

How would you describe your English skills?

	Yes	No	No opinion
I feel that I know English as well as a native speaker	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel that I know English better than a senior on average	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel that I know English well enough	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am ashamed of my English skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Statements

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	No opinion
I will use English more with non-native speakers than with native speakers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would like to learn to speak English like a native speaker	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I do not like to say aloud my thoughts in English unless I am sure my utterance is grammatically correct	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
When I communicate in English, conveying the message is more important than error-free language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
In light of my future, it is important that I know English, for example, in studies, work, free time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Using English is easier with native speakers than with non-native speakers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There are more native English speakers than non-native speakers in the world	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Non-native speakers know how English should be pronounced and written	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The target for foreign language teaching should be a native-like proficiency	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Different Englishes

Which one of the following varieties of English appeals to you the most?

- ☐ British English
- ☐ American English
- ☐ Finnish English
- ☐ Irish English
- ☐ Australian English
- ☐ Canadian English
- ☐ Indian English
- ☐ No opinion or I do not recognize the different varieties

Which one of the following varieties of English appeals to you the least?

- ☐ British English
- ☐ American English
- ☐ Finnish English
- ☐ Irish English
- ☐ Australian English
- ☐ Canadian English
- ☐ Indian English
- ☐ No opinion or I do not recognize the different varieties

How do you feel when you hear a famous Finn speaking English poorly on TV?

- ☐ Admiration for a good effort
- ☐ Pride in having better language skills yourself
- ☐ Amusement
- ☐ Sympathy
- ☐ Irritation
- ☐ Embarrassment on behalf of Finns
- ☐ No feeling at all

How do you feel when you hear a famous Finns speaking English on TV fluently but with a Finnish accent?

- ☐ Pride in Finns
- ☐ Pride in having better language skills yourself
- ☐ Admiration for the speaker
- ☐ Amusement
- ☐ Sympathy
- ☐ Irritation
- ☐ Inferiority at having worse language skills yourself
- ☐ Embarrassment on behalf of Finns
- ☐ No feeling at all

How do you feel when you hear a famous Finn speaking English on TV fluently, like a native speaker of English?

- ☐ Pride in Finns
- ☐ Admiration for the speaker
- ☐ Amusement
- ☐ Irritation
- ☐ Inferiority at having worse language skills yourself
- ☐ Embarrassment on behalf of Finns
- ☐ No feeling at all

### **Native and non-native teachers**

Is your current English teacher a native speaker of English?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I have both a native and a non-native teacher

Have you had teachers who speak English as their mother tongue?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	No experience
My experiences with native teachers have been positive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My experiences with non-native teachers have been positive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did the nature of your previous experiences affect your learning of English?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes				<input type="checkbox"/> No

**Statements**

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	No opinion
If I could choose, I would want a native English speaker as my English teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If I could choose, I would want a non-native English speaker as my English teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If I could choose, I would want that English courses had both native and non-native teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A non-native teacher is better at teaching grammar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A native teacher is better at teaching oral skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A non-native teacher is better at teaching vocabulary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A native teacher is better at teaching cultural aspects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I believe that I am able to learn English just as well from a native teacher and a non-native teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is important for me to get help also in Finnish	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The most important quality in an English teacher is good linguistic skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A non-native teacher's linguistic skills cannot be as good as a native speaker's	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
During the lessons it is most important that English is used most of the time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A non-native teacher is a better language learner model	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teachers' linguistic skills are more important than their teaching skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A native teacher does not know what it is like to learn a foreign language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Which one would you prefer to take as your English teacher?

- ☐ A native teacher  
☐ A non-native teacher  
☐ Both  
☐ No preference

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the most important quality in an English teacher in light of your learning? \_\_\_\_\_

In your opinion, is this a native teacher's or a non-native teacher's quality?

- ☐ Native teacher's quality     
 ☐ Non-native teacher's quality     
 ☐ It can be found in both

**Other comments**

If you wish to justify your answers or give other comments, you can write your comments here.

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**Appendix 3:** Summary of the results (frequencies and relative frequencies)

## 1. Mother tongue

<b>Finnish</b>	<b>Bilingual Finnish speaker</b>	<b>Other than Finnish</b>	<b>Total</b>
173	5	5	183
95%	3%	3%	101%*

## 2. Beginning of English studies

<b>3rd grade</b>	<b>4th grade</b>	<b>Before 3rd grade</b>	<b>Total</b>
133	31	19	183
73%	17%	10%	100%

## 3. Staying at an English-speaking country (over 3 months)

<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Total</b>
16	167	183
9%	91%	100%

## 4. Interest in learning English (1 not interested - 5 very interested)

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Total</b>
1	3	34	65	80	183
1%	2%	19%	36%	44%	102%*

## 5. Overall English proficiency

<b>Poor</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Total</b>
6	35	90	52	183
3%	19%	49%	28%	99%*

## 6. English proficiency in different linguistic skills

	<b>Only a few words</b>	<b>With difficulty</b>	<b>Moderately</b>	<b>Fairly fluently</b>	<b>Fluently</b>	<b>Total</b>
Speak	0 0%	8 4%	40 22%	97 53%	38 21%	183 100%
Write	0 0%	10 6%	34 19%	89 49%	50 27%	183 101%*
Read	0 0%	3 2%	25 14%	69 38%	86 47%	183 101%*
Understand	0 0%	4 2%	12 7%	77 42%	90 49%	183 100%

## 7. Description of linguistic skills

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No opinion</b>	<b>Total</b>
As well as a native English speaker	28 15%	142 78%	13 7%	183 100%
Better than a senior on average	93 51%	69 38%	21 12%	183 101%*
Well enough	148 81%	32 18%	3 2%	183 101%*
I am ashamed of my English skills	28 15%	147 80%	8 4%	183 99%*

STATEMENTS	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	No opinion	Total
8. I will use English more with non-native speakers than with native speakers	2 1%	22 12%	93 51%	30 16%	36 20%	183 100%
9. I would like to learn to speak English like a native speaker	7 4%	31 17%	64 35%	76 42%	5 3%	183 101%*
10. I do not like to say aloud my thoughts in English unless I am sure my utterance is grammatically correct	42 23%	69 38%	56 31%	16 9%	0 0%	183 101%*
11. When I communicate in English, conveying the message is more important than error-free language	2 1%	8 4%	53 29%	118 65%	2 1%	183 100%
12. In light of my future, it is important that I know English, for example, in studies, work, free time	1 1%	6 3%	39 21%	133 73%	4 2%	183 100%
13. Using English is easier with native speakers than with non-native speakers	16 9%	58 32%	56 31%	27 15%	26 14%	183 101%*
14. There are more native English speakers than non-native speakers in the world	76 42%	54 30%	14 8%	2 1%	37 20%	183 101%*
15. Non-native speakers know how English should be pronounced and written	12 7%	81 44%	67 37%	6 3%	17 9%	183 100%
16. The target for foreign language teaching should be a native-like proficiency	31 17%	69 38%	58 32%	19 10%	6 3%	183 100%

### 17. Most appealing variety of English

British English	American English	Finnish English	Irish English	Australian English	Canadian English	Indian English	No opinion	Total
82 45%	69 38%	2 1%	7 4%	12 7%	3 2%	1 1%	7 4%	183 102%*

### 18. Least appealing variety of English

British English	American English	Finnish English	Irish English	Australian English	Canadian English	Indian English	No opinion	Total
8 4%	8 4%	33 18%	19 10%	6 3%	1 1%	74 40%	34 19%	183 99%*

### 19. Feeling when a Finn speaks English poorly on TV

Admiration for a good effort	Pride in having better language skills	Amusement	Sympathy	Irritation	Embarrassment on behalf of Finns	No feeling at all	Total
14 8%	5 3%	61 33%	50 27%	6 3%	29 16%	18 10%	183 100%

## 20. Feeling when a Finn speaks English on TV fluently with a Finnish accent

Pride in Finns	Pride in having better language skills	Admiration for the speaker	Amusement	Sympathy	Irritation	Inferiority at having worse language skills	Embarrassment on behalf of Finns	No feeling at all	Total
49	7	44	26	7	0	2	3	45	183
27%	4%	24%	14%	4%	0%	1%	2%	25%	101%*

## 21. Feeling when a Finn speaks English on TV fluently, like a native speaker

Pride in Finns	Admiration for the speaker	Amusement	Irritation	Inferiority at having worse language skills	Embarrassment on behalf of Finns	No feeling at all	Total
49	95	2	1	6	1	29	183
27%	52%	1%	1%	3%	1%	16%	101%*

## 22. Is your current teacher a native speaker?

Yes	No	Both	Total
4	168	11	183
2%	98%	6%	100%

## 23. Have you had native English speaker teachers?

Yes	No	Total
53	130	183
29%	71%	100%

## 24. Experiences with native teachers have been positive

Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	No experience	Total
2	5	14	49	113	183
1%	3%	8%	27%	62%	101%*

## 25. Experiences with non-native teachers have been positive

Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	No experience	Total
4	8	71	90	10	183
2%	4%	39%	49%	6%	100%

## 26. The nature of previous experience affected learning

Yes	No	Total
110	73	183
60%	40%	100%

STATEMENTS	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	No opinion	Total
27. If I could choose, I would want a native English speaker as my English teacher	9	35	66	41	32	183
	5%	19%	36%	22%	18%	100%
28. If I could choose, I would want a non-native English speaker as my English teacher	7	48	78	16	34	183
	4%	26%	43%	9%	19%	101%*
29. If I could choose, I would want that English courses had both native and non-native teachers	8	17	59	69	30	183
	4%	9%	32%	38%	16%	99%*
30. A non-native teacher is better at teaching grammar	4	18	70	37	54	183
	2%	10%	38%	20%	30%	100%
31. A native teacher is better at teaching oral skills	8	6	59	76	34	183
	4%	3%	32%	42%	19%	100%
32. A non-native teacher is better at teaching vocabulary	9	35	47	19	73	183
	5%	19%	26%	10%	40%	100%
33. A native teacher is better at teaching cultural aspects	2	13	53	79	36	183
	1%	7%	29%	43%	20%	100%
34. I believe that I am able to learn English just as well from a native teacher and a non-native teacher	4	15	65	76	23	183
	2%	8%	36%	42%	13%	101%*
35. It is important for me to get help also in Finnish	15	28	51	83	6	183
	8%	15%	28%	45%	3%	99%*
36. The most important quality in an English teacher is good linguistic skills	3	35	71	55	19	183
	2%	19%	39%	30%	10%	100%
37. A non-native teacher's linguistic skills cannot be as good as a native speaker's	50	63	31	21	18	183
	27%	34%	17%	12%	10%	100%
38. During the lessons it is most important that English is used most of the time	2	12	79	79	11	183
	1%	7%	43%	43%	6%	100%
39. A non-native teacher is a better language learner model	13	31	65	10	64	183
	7%	17%	36%	6%	35%	101%*
40. Teachers' linguistic skills are more important than their teaching skills	68	79	17	2	17	183
	37%	43%	9%	1%	9%	99%*
41. A native teacher does not know what it is like to learn a foreign language	37	71	27	5	43	183
	20%	39%	15%	3%	24%	101%*

42. Who would you choose as your English teacher?

Native teacher	Non-native teacher	Both	No preference	Total
28	28	80	47	183
15%	15%	44%	26%	100%

45. In which teacher can the most important quality be found?

Native teacher	Non-native teacher	Both	Total
11	30	142	183
6%	16%	78%	100%

\* Due to rounding the total percentage of the rows might be 99%-102%

## Appendix 4: Cross-tabulations and correlations

### 1. Teacher preference and overall English proficiency

**Teacher preference \* Overall English proficiency Crosstabulation**

	Overall English proficiency				Total
	Poor	Moderate	Good	Excellent	
Native teacher	0 0,0%	3 10,7%	12 42,9%	13 46,4%	28 100,0%
Non-native teacher	2 7,1%	7 25,0%	15 53,6%	4 14,3%	28 100,0%
Both	2 2,5%	13 16,2%	46 57,5%	19 23,8%	80 100,0%
No preference	2 4,3%	12 25,5%	17 36,2%	16 34,0%	47 100,0%
Total	6 3,3%	35 19,1%	90 49,2%	52 28,4%	183 100,0%

**Symmetric Measures**

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal Contingency Coefficient	,273	,098
N of Valid Cases	183	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Symmetric Measures taking into account only native teacher and non-native teacher groups:

**Symmetric Measures**

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal Contingency Coefficient	,367	,034
N of Valid Cases	56	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

## 2. Teacher preference and learning target

**Teacher preference \* The target in EFL should be native-like proficiency Crosstabulation**

	The target in EFL should be native-like proficiency					Total
	No opinion	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	
Native teacher	0	3	6	12	7	28
	0,0%	10,7%	21,4%	42,9%	25,0%	100,0%
Non-native teacher	0	8	12	8	0	28
	0,0%	28,6%	42,9%	28,6%	0,0%	100,0%
Both	2	13	28	28	9	80
	2,5%	16,2%	35,0%	35,0%	11,2%	100,0%
No preference	4	7	23	10	3	47
	8,5%	14,9%	48,9%	21,3%	6,4%	100,0%
Total	6	31	69	58	19	183
	3,3%	16,9%	37,7%	31,7%	10,4%	100,0%

**Symmetric Measures**

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal Contingency Coefficient	,349	,013
N of Valid Cases	183	

- a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.  
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Symmetric Measures taking into account native teacher and non-native teacher groups:

**Symmetric Measures**

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal Contingency Coefficient	,421	,007
N of Valid Cases	56	

- a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.  
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

## 3. Teacher preference and current teacher

**Teacher preference \* Is your current teacher a native English speaker? Crosstabulation**

	Is your current teacher a native English speaker?			Total
	No	Yes	Both	
Native teacher	24 85,7%	1 3,6%	3 10,7%	28 100,0%
Non-native teacher	28 100,0%	0 0,0%	0 0,0%	28 100,0%
Both	72 90,0%	2 2,5%	6 7,5%	80 100,0%
No preference	44 93,6%	1 2,1%	2 4,3%	47 100,0%
Total	168 91,8%	4 2,2%	11 6,0%	183 100,0%

**Symmetric Measures**

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal Contingency Coefficient	,155	,608
N of Valid Cases	183	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Symmetric Measures taking into account native teacher and non-native teacher groups:

**Symmetric Measures**

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal Contingency Coefficient	,267	,116
N of Valid Cases	56	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.



## 4. Teacher preference and experience with native teachers

**Teacher preference \* Have you had native speaker teachers? Crosstabulation**

	Have you had native speaker teachers?		Total
	No	Yes	
Native teacher	15 53,6%	13 46,4%	28 100,0%
Non-native teacher	26 92,9%	2 7,1%	28 100,0%
Both	52 65,0%	28 35,0%	80 100,0%
No preference	37 78,7%	10 21,3%	47 100,0%
Total	130 71,0%	53 29,0%	183 100,0%

**Symmetric Measures**

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal Contingency Coefficient	,261	,004
N of Valid Cases	183	

- a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.  
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Symmetric Measures taking into account native teacher and non-native teacher groups:

**Symmetric Measures**

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal Contingency Coefficient	,405	,001
N of Valid Cases	56	

- a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.  
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

## 5. Teacher preference and previous experiences with native teachers

**Teacher preference \* Previous experiences with native teachers have been positive Crosstabulation**

	Previous experiences with native teachers have been positive				Total
	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	
Native teacher	1 6,2%	0 0,0%	3 18,8%	12 75,0%	16 100,0%
Non-native teacher	1 20,0%	1 20,0%	2 40,0%	1 20,0%	5 100,0%
Both	0 0,0%	1 3,1%	4 12,5%	27 84,4%	32 100,0%
No preference	0 0,0%	3 17,6%	5 29,4%	9 52,9%	17 100,0%
Total	2 2,9%	5 7,1%	14 20,0%	49 70,0%	70 100,0%

**Symmetric Measures**

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal Contingency Coefficient	,462	,025
N of Valid Cases	70	

- a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.  
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Symmetric Measures taking into account native teacher and non-native teacher groups:

**Symmetric Measures**

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal Contingency Coefficient	,487	,088
N of Valid Cases	21	

- a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.  
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

## 6. Teacher preference and previous experiences with non-native teachers

**Teacher preference \* Previous experiences with non-native teachers have been positive Crosstabulation**

	Previous experiences with non-native teachers have been positive				Total
	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	
Native teacher	2 7,4%	1 3,7%	12 44,4%	12 44,4%	27 100,0%
Non-native teacher	0 0,0%	0 0,0%	10 38,5%	16 61,5%	26 100,0%
Both	1 1,4%	3 4,1%	31 41,9%	39 52,7%	74 100,0%
No preference	1 2,2%	4 8,7%	18 39,1%	23 50,0%	46 100,0%
Total	4 2,3%	8 4,6%	71 41,0%	90 52,0%	173 100,0%

**Symmetric Measures**

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal Contingency Coefficient	,208	,549
N of Valid Cases	173	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Symmetric Measures taking into account native teacher and non-native teacher groups:

**Symmetric Measures**

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal Contingency Coefficient	,257	,291
N of Valid Cases	53	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.